The Crow's Nest

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by Clarence Day, Jr.

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The Crow's Nest

The Three Tigers

As to Tiger Number One, what he likes best is prowling and hunting. He snuffs at all the interesting and exciting smells there are on the breeze; that dark breeze that tells him the secrets the jungle has hid: every nerve in his body is alert, every hair in his whiskers; his eyes gleam; he's ready for anything. He and Life are at grips.



Number Two is a higher-browed tiger, in a nice cozy cave. He has spectacles; he sits in a rocking-chair reading a book. And the book describes all the exciting smells there are on the breeze, and tells him what happens in the jungle, where nerves are alert; where adventure, death, hunting and passion are found every night. He spends his life reading about them, in a nice cozy cave.

It's a curious practice. You'd think if he were interested in jungle life he'd go out and live it. There it is, waiting for him, and that's what he really is here for. But he makes a

cave and shuts himself off from it—and then reads about it!

* * *

Once upon a time some victims of the book-habit got into heaven; and what do you think, they behaved there exactly as here. That was to be expected, however: habits get so ingrained. They never took the trouble to explore their new celestial surroundings; they sat in the harp store-room all eternity, and read about heaven.

They said they could really learn more about heaven, that way.

And in fact, so they could. They could get more information, and faster. But information's pretty thin stuff, unless mixed with experience.

* * *

But that's not the worst. It is Tiger Number Three who's the worst. He not only reads all the time, but he wants what he reads sweetened up. He objects to any sad or uncomfortable account of outdoors; he says it's sad enough in his cave; he wants something uplifting. So authors obediently prepare uplifting accounts of the jungle, or they try to make the jungle look pretty, or funny, or something; and Number Three reads every such tale with great satisfaction. And since he's indoors all the time



Book-lovers in Heaven

and never sees the real jungle, he soon gets to think that these nice books he reads may be true; and if new books describe the jungle the way it is, he says they're unhealthy. "There are aspects of life in the jungle," he says, getting hot, "that no

decent tiger should ever be aware of, or notice."

Tiger Number Two speaks with contempt of these feelings of Three's. Tigers should have more courage. They should bravely read about the real jungle.

* * *

The realist and the romantic tiger are agreed upon one point, however. They both look down on tigers that don't read but merely go out and live.

As They Go Riding By

What kind of men do we think the mediæval knights really were? I have always seen them in a romantic light, finer than human. Tennyson gave me that apple, and I confess I did eat, and I have lived on the wrong diet ever since. Malory was almost as misleading. My net impression was that there were a few wicked, villainous knights, who committed crimes such as not trusting other knights or saying mean things, but that even they were subject to shame when found out and rebuked, and that all the rest were a fine, earnest Y. M. C. A. crowd, with the noblest ideals.

But only the poets hold this view of knights, not the scholars. Here, for example, is a cold-hearted scholar, Monsieur Albert Guerard. He has been digging into the old mediæval records with an unromantic eye, hang him; and he has emerged with his hands full of facts which prove the knights were quite different. They did have some good qualities. When invaders came around the knights fought them off as nobly as possible; and they often went away and fought Saracens or ogres or such, and when thus engaged they gave little trouble to the good folk at home. But in

between wars, not being educated, they couldn't sit still and be quiet. It was dull in the house. They liked action. So they rode around the streets in a pugnacious, wild-western manner, despising anyone who could read and often knocking him down; and making free with the personal property of merchants and peasants, who they thought had no special right to property or even to life. Knights who felt rough behaved as such, and the injuries they inflicted were often fatal.

They must have been terrors. Think of being a merchant or cleric without any armor, and meeting a gang of ironclads, with the nearest police court centuries off! Why, they might do anything, and whatever they did to a merchant, they thought was a joke. Whenever they weren't beating you up they fought with one another like demons—I don't mean just in tournaments, which were for practice, but in small, private wars. And to every war, public or private, citizens had to contribute: and instead of being thanked for it, they were treated with the utmost contempt.

Suppose a handsome young citizen, seeing this and feeling ambitious, tried to join the gang and become a knight himself. Would they let him? No! At first, if he were a powerful fighter, he did have a small chance, but as time went on and the knights got to feeling more noble than ever,

being not only knights but the sons of knights, they wouldn't let in a new man. The mere idea made them so indignant they wanted to lynch him. "Their loathing for the people seemed almost akin in its intensity to color prejudice."

They were also extravagant and improvident and never made money, so the more they spent



the more they had to demand from the people. When every one had been squeezed dry for miles around, and had been thumped to make sure, the knights cursed horribly and borrowed from the Church, whether the Church would or no, or got hold of some money-lender and pulled his beard and never paid interest.

The Church tried to make them religious and partly succeeded; there were some Christian knights who were soldierly and courtly, of course. But, allowing for this (and for my exaggerating

their bad side, for the moment), they certainly were not the kind of men Tennyson led me to think.

I do not blame Tennyson. He had a perfect right to romanticize. He may have known what toughs the knights were as well as anybody, but loved their noble side, too, and dreamed about it until he had made it for the moment seem real to him, and then hurried up and written his idyls before the dream cracked. He may never have intended me or any of us to swallow it whole. "It's not a dashed bible; it's a book of verse," I can imagine him saying, "so don't be an idiot; don't forget to read your encyclopedia, too."

But verse is mightier than any encyclopedia. At least it prevails. That's because the human race is emotional and goes by its feelings. Why haven't encyclopedists considered this? They are the men I should blame. What is the use of embodying the truth about everything in a precise condensed style which, even if we read it, we can't remember, since it does not stir our feelings? The encyclopedists should write their books over again, in passionate verse. What we need in an encyclopedia is lyrical fervor, not mere completeness—Idyls of Economic Jurisprudence, Songs of the Nitrates. Our present compendiums are meant for scholars rather than people.

Well, the knights are gone and only their ar-

mor and weapons remain; and our rich merchants who no longer are under-dogs, collect these as curios. They present them with a magnificent gesture to local museums. The metal suit which old Sir Percy Mortimer wore, when riding down merchants, is now in the Briggsville Academy,



which never heard of Sir Percy, and his armor is a memorial to Samuel Briggs of the Briggs Tailoring Company. In Europe a few ancient families, in financial decay, are guarding their ancestors' clothing as well as they can, but sooner or later they will be driven to sell it, to live. And they won't live much longer at that. The race will soon be extinct.

Last year I got a bulletin of the Metropolitan

Museum of Art about armor. It described how an American collector saw a fine set in Paris. "A single view was quite enough to enable him to decide that the armor was too important to remain in private hands." And that settled it. These collectors are determined fellows and must have their own way—like the knights.

But there were difficulties this time. They couldn't at first get this set. The knightly owner of the armor, "in whose family it was an heirloom, was, from our point of view, singularly unreasonable: he . . . was unwilling to part with it; the psychological crisis when he would allow it to pass out of his hands must, therefore, be awaited." For there comes "a propitious moment in cases of this kind," adds the bulletin.

Yes, "in cases of this kind" collectors comfortably wait for that crisis when the silent old knightly owner finally has to give in. They leave agents to watch him while he struggles between want and pride, agents who will snap him up if a day comes when the old man is weak. These agents must be persistent and shrewd, and must present tactful arguments, and must shoo away other agents, if possible, so as to keep down the price. When the "propitious" time comes they must act quickly, lest the knight's weakness pass, or lest some other knight send him help and thus make them wait longer. And, having got the

armor, they hurry it off, give a dinner, and other merchants come to view it and measure it and count up the pieces.

This sort of thing has been happening over and over in Europe—the closing scenes of the order of knighthood, not foreseen at gay tournaments! They were lucky in those days not to be able to look into the future. Are *we* lucky to be blind, at Mount Vernon or on some old campus? The new times to come may be better—that always is possible—but they won't be the kind we are building, and they may scrap our shrines.

Some day when our modern types of capitalists are extinct, in their turn, will future poets sing of their fine deeds and make young readers dream? Our capitalists are not popular in these days, but the knights weren't in theirs, and whenever abuse grows extreme a reaction will follow. Our critics and reformers think *they* will be the heroes of song, but do we sing of critics who lived in the ages of chivalry? There must have been reformers then who pleaded the cause of down-trodden citizens, and denounced and exposed cruel knights, but we don't know their names. It is the knights we remember and idealize, even old Front-de-Bœuf. They were doers—and the men of the future will idealize ours. Our predatory interests will seem to them gallant and strong. When a new Tennyson appears, he will never look up the

things in our newspapers; he won't even read the encyclopedia—Tennysons don't. He will get his conception of capitalists out of his heart. Mighty men who built towers to work in, and fought with one another, and engaged in great capitalist wars, and stood high above labor. King Carnegie and his round directors' table of barons of steel. Armour, Hill and Stillman, Jay Gould—musical names, fit for poems.

The men of the future will read, and disparage their era, and wish they had lived in the wild clashing times we have now. They will try to enliven the commonplaceness of their tame daily lives by getting up memorial pageants where they can dress up as capitalists—some with high hats and umbrellas (borrowed from the museums), some as golfers or polo players, carrying the queer ancient implements. Beautiful girls will happily unbuckle their communist suits and dress up in old silken low-necks, hired from a costumer. Little boys will look on with awe as the procession goes by, and then hurry off to the back yard and play they are great financiers. And if some essay, like this, says the capitalists were not all noble, but a mixed human lot like the knights, many with selfish, harsh ways, the reader will turn from it restlessly. We need these illusions.

Ah, well, if we must romanticize something, it had best be the past.

A Man Gets Up in the Morning

A man gets up in the morning and looks out at the weather, and dresses, and goes to his work, and says hello to his friends, and plays a little pool in the evening and gets into bed. But only a part of him has been active in doing all that. He has a something else in him—a wondering instinct—a "soul." Assuming he isn't religious, what does he do with *that* part of him?

He usually keeps that part of him asleep if he can. He doesn't like to let it wake up and look around at the world, because it asks awful questions—about death, or truth—and that makes him uncomfortable. He wants to be cheery and he hates to have his soul interfere. The soul is too serious and the best thing to do is to deaden it.

Humor is an opiate for the soul, says Francis Hackett. Laugh it off: that's one way of not facing a trouble. Sentimentality, too, drugs the soul; so does business. That's why humor and sentimentality and business are popular.

In Russia, it's different. Their souls are more awake, and less covered. The Russians are not businesslike, and they're not sentimental, or humorous. They are spiritually naked by contrast. An odd, moody people. We look

on, well wrapped-up, and wonder why they shiver at life.

"My first interest," the Russian explains, "is to know where I stand: I must look at the past, and the seas of space about me, and the intricate human drama on this little planet. Before I can attend to affairs, or be funny, or tender, I must know whether the world's any good. Life may all be a fraud."

The Englishman and American answer that this is not practical. They don't believe in anyone's sitting down to stare at the Sphinx. "That won't get you anywhere," they tell him. "You must be up and doing. Find something that interests you, then do it, and—"

"Well, and what?" says the Russian.

"Why—er—and you'll find out as much of the Riddle in that way as any."

"And how much is that?"



"Why, not so very damn much perhaps," we answer. "But at least you'll keep sane."

"Why keep sane?" says the Russian. "If



there is any point to so doing I should naturally wish to. But if one can't find a meaning to anything, what is the difference?"

And the American and Englishman continue to recommend business.

Odd Countries

When I go away for a vacation, which I don't any more, I am or was appalled at the ridiculous inconveniences of it. I have sometimes gone to the Great Mother, Nature; sometimes to hotels. Well, the Great Mother is kind, it is said, to the birds and the beasts, the small furry creatures, and even, of old, to the Indian. But I am no Indian; I am not even a small furry creature. I dislike the Great Mother. She's damp: and far too full of insects.

And as for hotels, the man in the next room always snores. And by the time you get used to this, and get in with some gang, your vacation is over and you have to turn around and go home.



The farmer who hates you on sight

I can get more for my money by far from a book. For example, the Oppenheim novels: there are fifty-three of them, and to read them is almost like going on fifty-three tours. A man and his whole family could

take six for the price of one pair of boots. Instead of trying to find some miserable mosquito-ey hotel at the sea-shore, or an old farmer's farmhouse where the old farmer will hate you on sight, and instead of packing a trunk and running errands and catching a train I go to a book-shop and buy any Oppenheim novel. When I go on a tour with him, I start off so quickly and easily. I sit in my armchair, I turn to the first page, and it's like having a taxi at the door —"Here's your car, sir, all ready!" The minute I read that first page I am off like a shot, into a world where things never stop happening. Magnificent things! It's about as swift a change as you could ask from jog-trot daily life.



On page two, I suddenly discover that beautiful women surround me. Are they adventuresses? I cannot tell. I must beware every minute. Everybody is wary and suave, and they are all princes and diplomats. The atmosphere is heavy with the clashing of powerful wills. Paid murderers and spies are about. Hah! am I being watched? The excitement soon gets to a point where it goes to my head. I find myself mutter-

ing thickly or biting my lips—two things I never do ordinarily and should not think of doing. I may even give a hoarse cry of rage as I sit in my armchair. But I'm not in my armchair. I am on



a terrace, alone, in the moonlight. A beautiful woman (a reliable one) comes swiftly toward me. Either she is enormously rich or else I am, but we don't think of that. We embrace each other. Hark! There is the duke, busily muttering thickly. How am I to reply to him? I decide to give him a hoarse cry of rage. He bites his lips at me. Some one else shoots us both. All is over.

* * *

If any one is too restless to take his vacation in books, the quaintest and queerest of countries is just around the corner. An immigrant is only

allowed to stay from 8.15 to 11 P. M., but an hour in this country does more for you than a week in the mountains. No canned fish and vegetables, no babies—

I wonder, by the way, why most babies find existence so miserable? Convicts working on roadways, stout ladies in tight shoes and corsets, teachers of the French language—none of these suffering souls wail in public; *they* don't go around with puckered-up faces, distorted and screaming, and beating the air with clenched fists. Then why babies? You may say it's the nurse; but look at the patients in hospitals. They put up not only



with illness, but nurses besides. No, babies are unreasonable; they expect far too much of existence. Each new generation that comes takes one look at the world, thinks wildly, "Is *this* all they've

done to it?" and bursts into tears. "You might have got the place ready for us," they would say, only they can't speak the language. "What *have* you been doing all these thousands of years on this planet? It's messy, it's badly policed, badly laid out and built—"

Yes, Baby. It's dreadful. I don't know why we haven't done better. I said just now that you were unreasonable, but I take it all back. Statesmen complain if their servants fail to keep rooms and kitchens in order, but are statesmen themselves any good at getting the world tidied up? No, we none of us are. We all find it a wearisome business.

Let us go to that country I spoke of, the one round the corner. We stroll through its entrance, and we're in Theatrical-Land.

A remarkable country. May God bless the man who invented it. I always am struck by its ways, it's so odd and delightful—

"But," some one objects (it is possible), "it isn't real."

Ah, my dear sir, what world, then, *is* real, as a matter of fact? You won't deny that it's not only children who live in a world of their own, but débutantes, college boys, business men—certainly business men, so absorbed in their game that they lose sight of other realities. In fact, there is no one who doesn't lose sight of some, is

there? Well, that's all that the average play does. It drops just a few out. To be sure, when it does that, it shows us an incomplete world, and hence not the real one; but that is characteristic of humans. We spend our lives moving from one incomplete world to another, from our homes to our clubs or our offices, laughing or grumbling, talking rapidly, reading the paper, and not doing much thinking outside of our grooves. Daily life is more comfortable, somehow, if you narrow your vision. When you try to take in all the realities, all the far-away high ones, you must first become quite still and lonely. And then in your loneliness a fire begins to creep through your veins. It's—well—I don't know much about it. Shall we return to the theater?

The oddest of all entertainments is a musical comedy. I remember that during the war we had one about Belgium. When the curtain went up, soldiers were talking by the light of a lantern, and clapping each other on the shoulder when their feelings grew deep. They exchanged many well-worded thoughts on their deep feelings, too, and they spoke these thoughts briskly and readily, for it was the eve of a battle. One of the soldiers blinked his eye now and then. He was taking it hard. He said briskly he probably would never see his mother again.

His comrade, being affected by this, clapped

his friend on the shoulder, and said, Oh yes he would, and cheer up.

The other looked at him, stepped forward (with his chest well expanded), and said ringingly: "I was not thinking of myself, Jean. I was thinking of Bel-jum."

It was a trifle confusing, but we applauded him roundly for this. The light from the balcony shown full on the young hero's face. You could see he was ready for the enemy—his dark-rouged cheeks, his penciled eyebrows proved it. He offered to sing us a song, on the subject of home. His comrade hurried forward and clapped him some more on the shoulder.

The orchestra started.



"Muth-aw,
"Muth-aw,"
roared the hero, standing stiffly at attention,
"Let your arms en-fo-o-ho-old me."

All was silent on the firing-line—except of course, for this singing. The enemy waited politely. The orchestra played on. Then the song ended, and promptly the banging of guns was heard in the distance—and a rather mild bang hit the shed and the lantern went out.

The audience was left there to shudder alone, in the darkness, not knowing whether the hero was dead—though, of course, we had hopes. . . . Then up went the curtain, and there he stood by a château, where a plump Belgian maid, dressed in white silk, was pouring high tea.



An American war-correspondent appeared on the scene. He was the humorous character of the performance. He was always in trouble over his passports. He had with him a Red Cross nurse who capered about, singing songs, as did also eight Belgian girls, from the neighboring farms. Belgian girls are all young and tuneful, the audience learned, and they spend their time during wars dancing with war-correspondents. They wear fresh, pretty clothes. So do soldiers who come home on leave. Sky-blue uniforms, gilt, shiny boots. All was smiling in Bel-jum.

Then the clock struck eleven. The curtain went down, like a wall. We were turned out, like poor Cinderella, into the cold, noisy streets. Dense pushing crowds. Newsboys shouting, "Great Slaughter in Flanders." The wails of some baby attempting to get used to existence.

On Cows

I was thinking the other evening of cows. You say Why? I can't tell you. But it came to me, all of a sudden, that cows lead hard lives. It takes such a lot of grass, apparently, to keep a cow going that she has to spend all her time eating, day in and day out. Dogs bounce around and bark, horses caper, birds fly, also sing, while the cow looks on, enviously, maybe, unable to join them. Cows may long for conversation or prancing, for all that we know, but they can't spare the time. The problem of nourishment takes every hour: a pause might be fatal. So they go through life drearily eating, resentful and dumb. Their food is most uninteresting, and is frequently covered with bugs; and their thoughts, if they dwell on their hopeless careers, must be bitter.



In the old days, when huge and strange animals roamed through the world, there was an era

when great size was necessary, as a protection. All creatures that could do so grew large. It was only thus they felt safe. But as soon as they became large, the grass-eating creatures began to have trouble, because of the fact that grass has a low nutritive value. You take a dinosaur, for instance, who was sixty or seventy feet long. Imagine what a hard task it must have been for him, every day, to get enough grass down his throat to supply his vast body. Do you wonder that, as scientists tell us, they died of exhaustion? Some starved to death even while feverishly chewing their cud—the remoter parts of their bodies fainting from famine while their fore-parts got fed.

This exasperating fate is what darkens the mind of the cow.

Stroom and Graith



When Graith was young, and Stroom returned
From conquering the Northern Stars;
And showed to her the road he'd burned
Across the sky, to make his wars;
And smiled at Fear, and hid his scars—
He little dreamed his fate could hold
The doom of dwarfish avatars
That Vega sent, when Stroom was old.

When you are talking things over with any one, you have to take some precautions. If you have just come from a cathedral, and try to discuss its stained glass, with the janitor of your

apartment house, say,—why, it won't be much use, because stained glass means to him bathroom windows, and that's all his mind will run on. I am in exactly that position at this moment. I don't mean bathroom windows, I mean what is the use of my saying a word about Stroom and Graith, to any one who may think they are a firm of provision dealers in Yonkers. Any woman who began this essay thinking that Graith was a new perfume,—any man who said to himself "Stroom? Oh, yes: that Bulgarian ferment,"—are readers who would really do better to go and read something else.

Having settled that, I must now admit that until yesterday I knew nothing about them myself. Yet, centuries ago, Stroom and Graith were on every one's tongues. Then, I don't know what happened, but a strange silence about them began. One by one, those who had spoken of them freely in some way were hushed. The chronicles of the times became silent, and named them no more.

We think when we open our histories, we open the past. We open only such a small part of it! Great tracts disappear. Forgetfulness or secret taboos draw the dim curtains down, and hide from our sight awful thoughts, monstrous deeds, monstrous dooms. . . .

Even now, in the bright lights and courage of the era we live in, there has been only one

writer who has ventured to name Stroom and Graith.

His name was Dixon; he was at Oxford, in the fifties, with that undergraduate group which included Burne-Jones, William Morris, and on the outside, Rossetti. Where he found what so long had been hidden, even he does not say. But he wrote certain poems, in which Stroom and Graith, and the Agraffe appear.

This fact is recorded in only one book that I know of, and that is in the fifth volume of Mr. T. Humphry Ward's English Poets. When I opened this book, I read for the first time about Dixon. I also read one of his poems, which was wildish and weird:

> "Go now from the shore,
> Far ruined: the grey shingly floor
> To thy crashing step answers, the doteril cries,
> And on dipping wing flies:
> 'Tis their silence!"

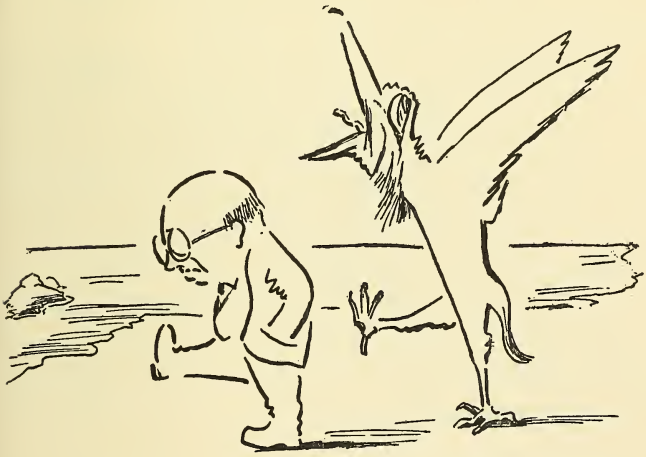
Not knowing what a doteril was, I looked to see if the editor had explained: but no, all he said was that Dixon was fond of such words.

He added that others such as Stroom, Graith, and Agraffe appeared in his poems.

But he didn't print those poems in this collection, or explain those strange names.

The sound of them fascinated me. I sat there and dreamed for a while; and it was out of

these dreamings that I wrote that verse at the head of this essay. Some stern and vast mystery seemed to me about to enfold. What part



Where the doteril cries

the Agraffe played in it (a mediæval beast I imagined) I could not know, could not guess. But I pictured a strong-hearted Stroom to myself as some hero, waging far, lonely fights, against foes on the edge of the skies; and I dreamed of how Vega stood waiting, until Stroom married Graith, and of how at the height of his majesty she inflicted her doom—a succession of abhorrent rebirths as a grotesque little dwarf.

Still, these were only my imaginings, and I

wanted the records. I sent to the public library, and got out all of Dixon they had. Great red and gold volumes. But the one that I wanted—not there. . . . I sent to several famous universities. . . . It was not to be found.

I turned my search over to an obliging old friend, a librarian, and sat down feeling thwarted, to console myself with some other poet. There were many in Volume V of the English Poets, but not a one of them calmed me. I read restlessly every day, waiting to hear about Stroom. Then at last, one rainy evening, a telegram came! It was from that old friend. "Have found all those words Dixon used, in a dialect dictionary. It gives: 'Stroom: rightly strom: a malt strainer, a wicker-work basket or bottle, placed under the bunghole of a mash-tub to strain off the hops.' Mr. Dixon used it because he loved its sound, I suppose. As to Graith, it means 'furniture, equipment, apparatus for traveling.' And agraffes are the ornamented hooks used to fasten Knights' armor. They are mentioned in Ivanhoe."

Well, poets are always disappointing me.

I don't know why I read them.

* * *

However, having bought Volume V to read, I tried to keep on with it.

I read what it said about Browning's father being a banker. Poor old man, I felt sorry for



him. Imagine the long years when he and his son faced each other, the old father telling himself hopefully, "Ah, well, he's a child, he'll get over these queer poetical ways,"—and then his *not* getting over them, but proposing to give his life to poetry! Make a career of it!

If there are any kind of men who want sons like themselves, it's our bankers: they have their banks to hand on, and they long to have nice banker babies. But it seems they are constantly begetting impossible infants. Cardinal Newman for instance: his bewildered father too was a

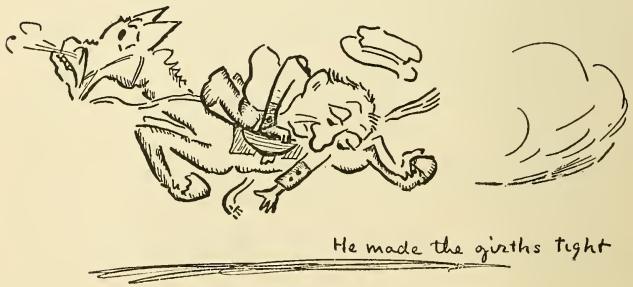
banker. Fate takes a special pleasure in tripping these worthy men up.

Imagine Browning senior reading "Pippa Passes," with pursed lips, at his desk. What mental pictures of his son's heroine did the old gentleman form, as he followed her on her now famous walk through that disreputable neighborhood?

I hope he enjoyed more "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent." For example, where the man says, while galloping fast down the road:

> "I turned in my saddle and made the girths tight,
> Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique right,
> Rebuckled the check-strap, chained slacker the bit—"

The banker must have been pleased that Robert could harness a horse in rhyme anyhow. I dare say he knew as we all do that it was poor enough



He made the girths tight

poetry, but at least it was practical. It was something he could tell his friends at the club.

* * *

Putting Browning aside with poor Stroom, I next tried Matthew Arnold.

The Arnolds: a great family, afflicted with an unfortunate strain. Unusually good qualities,—but they feel conscientious about them.

If Matthew Arnold had only been born into some other family! If he had only been the son of C. S. Calverley or Charles II, for instance.

He had a fine mind, and he and it matured early. Both were Arnold characteristics. But so was his conscientiously setting himself to enrich his fine mind "by the persistent study of 'the best that is known and thought in the world.' " This was deadening. Gentlemen who teach themselves just how and what to appreciate, take half the vitality out of their appreciation thereafter. They go out and collect all "the best" and bring it carefully home, and faithfully pour it down their throats—and get drunk on it? No! It loses its lift and intoxication, taken like that.

An aspiring concern with good art is supposed to be meritorious. People "ought" to go to museums and concerts, and they "ought" to read poetry. It is a mark of superiority to have a full supply of the most correct judgments.

This doctrine is supposed to be beyond dis-

cussion, Leo Stein says. "I do not think it is beyond discussion," he adds. "It is more nearly beneath it. . . . To teach or formally to encourage the appreciation of art does more harm than good. . . . It tries to make people see things that they do not feel. . . . People are stuffed with appreciation in our art galleries, instead of looking at pictures for the fun of it."

Those who take in art for the fun of it, and don't fake their sensations, acquire an appetite that it is a great treat to satisfy. And by and by, art becomes as necessary to them as breathing fresh air.

To the rest of us, art is only a luxury: a dessert, not a food.

* * *

Some poets have to struggle with a harsh world for leave to be poets, like unlucky peaches trying to ripen north of Latitude 50. Coventry Patmore by contrast was bred in a hot-house. He was the son of a man named Peter G. Patmore, who, unlike most fathers, was willing to have a poet in the family. In fact he was eager. He was also, unfortunately, helpful, and did all he could to develop in his son "an ardor for poetry." But ardor is born, not cooked. A watched pot never boils. Nor did Patmore. He had many of the other good qualities that all poets need, but the quality Peter G. planned to

develop in the boy never grew. Young Patmore studied the best Parnassian systems, he obeyed the best rules, he practiced the right spiritual calisthenics, took his dumb-bells out daily: but he merely proved that poetry is not the automatic result of going through even the properest motions correctly.

Still he kept on, year by year, and the results were impressive. Many respected them highly. Including their author.

He grew old in this remarkable harness. Perhaps he also grew tired. At any rate, at sixty-three he "solemnly recorded" the fact that he had finally finished "his task as a poet." He lived for about ten years more, but the remainder was silence. "He had been a practicing poet for forty-seven years," Edmund Gosse says. Odd way for Gosse to talk: as though he were describing a dentist.

One of this worthy Mr. Patmore's most worthy ideas was that the actual writing of verse was but a part of his job. Not even professional poets, he felt, should make it their chief occupation. No; one ought to spend months, maybe years, meditating on everything, in order to supply his soul with plenty of suitable thoughts—like a tailor importing fine woolens to accumulate stock. And even with the shelves full, one ought not to work till just the right hour.

His theories called for a conscientious inspection of each inspiration. They also obliged this good gentleman to exercise self-control. Many a time when he wanted to work he held back. Although "the intention to write was never out of his mind" (Mr. Gosse says), Mr. Patmore had "the power of will to refuse himself the satisfaction of writing, except on those rare occasions when he felt capable of doing his best."

There once was a man I knew, who wooed his fiancée on those terms. He used to sit thinking away in his library, evenings, debating whether he had better go see her, and whether he was at his best. And after fiddling about in a worried way between yes and no, he would sometimes go around only to find that she would not see *him*. I think that she loved the man, too, or was ready to love him. "His honesty has a horrible fascination for me," I remember her saying, "but when he has an impulse to kiss me—and I see him stop—and look as though he were taking his temperature with a thermometer first, trying to see if his blood is up—I want to hit him and scream!"

Mr. Patmore, however, was very firm about this being necessary. He had many a severe inner struggle because of his creed. He would repulse the most enticing inspiration, if his thermometer wasn't at just the right figure. Neither

he nor his inspirations were robust, but they were evenly matched, and they must have wrestled obstinately and often in the course of his life, and pushed each other about and exchanged slaps and tense bloodless pinches. But whenever Mr. Patmore felt it his duty to wrestle, he won.



He took his temperature first

Consequently, looking backward he felt able to say when he was old: "I have written little, but it is all my best; I have never spoken when I had nothing to say, nor spared time nor labor to make my words true. I have respected posterity, and should there be a posterity which cares for letters, I dare to hope that it will respect me."

That last phrase has a manly ring. Imagine him, alone late at night, trying to sum up his life, and placing before us what bits he had managed to do before dying. We may live through some evening of that sort ourselves, by and by. We may turn to look back at the new faces of the young men and women who will some day be inheriting our world as we go out its gate. Will they laugh at us and think us pompous, as some of us regard Mr. Patmore? He doesn't seem

very hopeful, by the way, about our caring for letters, but he does seem to think, if we do, that we will not make fun of him.

I don't think he ought to mind that, though, if we are friendly about it. We certainly respect him compared with many men of his time—the shifty politicians, the vicious or weak leaders of thought, who went through life as softies, without rigid standards of conduct. He shines out by contrast, this incorruptible, solemn old Roman.

Only—he was so solemn! "From childhood to the grave" he thought he had "a mission to perform," with his poems. And what was this mission that he was so determined to fill? "He believed himself to be called upon to celebrate Nuptial Love."

Again it is his solemnity one smiles at, but not his idea. Nuptial Love? Very good. The possibilities of episodic love have been hotly explored, its rights have been defended, its spiritual joys have been sung. But Nuptial Love, our queer breed of humans, inconstant at heart, believes to be a tame thing by contrast: nearly all anti-climax. There are delights at the beginning, and a gentle glow (perhaps) at the end: for the rest it is a long dusty journey of which the less said the better. Exceptional couples who do somewhat better than this, and not only get along without storms but live contentedly too, are apt to con-

gratulate themselves and call their lives a success. Contentedly! Pah! Content with mere absence of friction! No conception, apparently, of the depths beyond depths two should find, who devote themselves deeply to each other for all of their lives. I don't say this often is possible: I think people try: but one or the other comes up against a hard place and stops. Only, sometimes it's not that which prevents going further; it's a waywardness that will not stick to any one mine to get gold. A man slips away and runs about, picking up stray outcroppings, but loses the rich veins of metal, far down in the earth.

Why is it that so few of us contentedly stick to one mate, and say to ourselves, "Here is my treasure; I will seek all in her."

Well, this is a subject on which I should enjoy speculating—but Nuptial Love happens to be a field in which I have had no experience, and furthermore it is not my theme anyhow, but my friend Mr. Patmore's, whose spirit has been standing indignantly by, as I wrote, as though it were ordering me away, with a No Trespassing look. I will therefore withdraw, merely adding that he himself didn't do any too well with it.

However, no poet can avoid an occasional slump. For all Mr. Patmore's efforts, he needs to be edited as much as the rest of them. Some of his little chance sayings were taking and odd:

"How strange a thing a lover seems
To animals that do not love."

But he always fell back into being humdrum and jog-trot. Take this stanza, from his poetical flight entitled Tamerton Church Tower:

"I mounted, now, my patient nag,
And scaled the easy steep;
And soon beheld the quiet flag
On Lanson's solemn Keep.
But he was writing jokes for Punch;
So I, who knew him well,
Deciding not to stay for lunch,
Returned to my hotel."

May I ask why such verses should be enshrined in a standard collection of poetry? The last four lines are good, they have a touch of humor or lightness, perhaps; but what can be said for the first four? And they, only, are Patmore's. The last four I added myself, in an effort to help.

"A man may mix poetry with prose as much as he pleases, and it will only elevate and enliven," as Landor observed; "but the moment he mixes a particle of prose with his poetry, it precipitates the whole."

* * *

All but the vulgar like poetry. This is using vulgarity in the sense in which Iva Jewel Geary defines it, as being "in its essence the acceptance of life as low comedy, and the willingness to be entertained by it always, as such. Whereas poetry," she says, "is the interpretation of life as serious drama: a play, in the main dignified and beautiful, or tragic."

Some readers take to poetry as to music, because it enraptures the ear. Others of us feel a need for its wisdom and insight—and wings. It deepens our everyday moods. It reminds us of Wonder. Here we are, with our great hearts and brains, descended from blind bits of slime, erecting a busy civilization on a beautiful earth; and that earth is whirling through space, amid great golden worlds: and yet, being grandsons of slime, we forget to look around us.

As Patmore expressed it:

"An idle poet, here and there,
Looks round him; but, for all the rest,
The world, unfathomably fair,
Is duller than a witling's jest.
Love wakes men, once a lifetime each;
They lift their heavy lids, and look;
And, lo, what one sweet page can teach,
They read with joy, then shut the book."

Legs vs. Architects

I don't know how many persons who hate climbing there are in the world; there must be, by and large, a great number. I'm one, I know that. But whenever a building is erected for the use of the public, the convenience of a non-climbing person is wholly ignored.

I refer, of course, to the debonair habit which architects have of never designing an entrance that is easy to enter. Instead of leaving the entrance on the street level so that a man can walk in, they perch it on a flight of steps, so that no one can get in without climbing.

The architect's defense is, it looks better. Looks better to whom? To architects, and possibly to tourists who never go in the building. It doesn't look better to the old or the lame, I can tell you; nor to people who are tired and have enough to do without climbing steps.

There are eminent scholars in universities, whose strength is taxed daily, because they must daily climb a parapet to get to their studies.

Everywhere there are thousands of men and women who must work for a living where some nonchalant architect has needlessly made their work harder.

Legs vs. Architects

I admit there is a dignity and beauty in a long flight of steps. Let them be used, then, around statues and monuments, where we don't have to mount them. But why put them where they add, every day, to the exertions of every one, and bar out some of the public completely? That's a hard-hearted beauty.

Suppose that, in the eye of an architect, it made buildings more beautiful to erect them on poles, as the lake dwellers did, ages back. (It would be only a little more obsolete than putting them on top of high steps.) Would the public meekly submit to this standard and shinny up poles all their lives?

Let us take the situation of a citizen who is not a mountaineering enthusiast. He can command every modern convenience in most of his ways. But if he happens to need a book in the Public Library what does he find? He finds that some architect has built the thing like a Greek temple. It is mounted on a long flight of steps, because the Greeks were all athletes. He tries the nearest university library. It has a flight that's still longer. He says to himself (at least I do), "Very well, then, I'll buy the damn book." He goes to the book-stores They haven't it. It is out of stock, out of print. The only available copies are those in the libraries, where they are supposed to be ready for every

one's use; and would be, too, but for the architects and their effete barricades.

This very thing happened to me last winter. I needed a book. As I was unable to climb into the Public Library, I asked one of my friends to go. He was a young man whose legs had not yet been worn out and ruined by architects. He reported that the book I wanted was on the reference shelves, and could not be taken out. If I could get in, I could read it all I wanted to, but not even the angels could bring it outside to me.

We went down there and took a look at the rampart which would have to be mounted. That high wall of steps! I tried with his assistance to climb them, but had to give up.

He said there was a side entrance. We went there, but there, too, we found steps.

"After you once get inside, there is an elevator," the doorkeeper said.

Isn't that just like an architect! To make everything inside as perfect as possible, and then keep you out!

There's a legend that a lame man once tried to get in the back way. There are no steps there, hence pedestrians are not admitted. It's a delivery entrance for trucks. So this man had himself delivered there in a packing case, disguised as the Memoirs of Josephine, and let them haul him all the way upstairs before he revealed he was not. But it seems they turn those cases upside

down and every which way in handling them, and he had to be taken to the hospital. He said it was like going over Niagara.

If there must be a test imposed on every one who enters a library, have a brain test, and keep out all readers who are weak in the head. No matter how good their legs are, if their brains aren't first-rate, keep 'em out. But, instead, we impose a leg test, every day of the year, on all comers. We let in the brainless without any examination at all, and shut out the most scholarly persons unless they have legs like an antelope's.

If an explorer told us of some tribe that did this, we'd smile at their ways, and think they had something to learn before they could call themselves civilized.

There are especially lofty steps built around the Metropolitan Museum, which either repel or tire out visitors before they get in. Of those who do finally arrive at the doors, up on top, many never have enough strength left to view the exhibits. They just rest in the vestibule awhile, and go home, and collapse.

It is the same way with most of our churches, and half of our clubs. Why, they are even beginning to build steps in front of our great railway stations. Yes, that is what happens when railway men trust a "good" architect. He designs something that will make it more difficult for people to

travel, and will discourage them and turn them back if possible at the start of their journey. And all this is done in the name of art. Why can't art be more practical?

There's one possible remedy:

No architect who had trouble with his own legs would be so inconsiderate. His trouble is, unfortunately, at the other end. Very well, break his legs. Whenever we citizens engage a new architect to put up a building, let it be stipulated in the contract that the Board of Aldermen shall break his legs first. The only objection I can think of is that his legs would soon get well. In that case, elect some more aldermen and break them again.

To Phoebe

It has recently been discovered that one of the satellites of Saturn, known as Phoebe, is revolving in a direction the exact contrary of that which all known astronomical laws would have led us to expect. English astronomers admit that this may necessitate a fundamental revision of the nebular hypothesis. —*Weekly Paper.*

Phoebe, Phoebe, whirling high
In our neatly-plotted sky,
Listen, Phoebe, to my lay:
Won't you whirl the other way?

All the other stars are good
And revolve the way they should.
You alone, of that bright throng,
Will persist in going wrong.

Never mind what God has said—
We have made a Law instead.
Have you never heard of this
Neb-u-lar Hy-poth-e-sis?

It prescribes, in terms exact,
Just how every star should act.
Tells each little satellite
Where to go and whirl at night.

The Crow's Nest

Disobedience incurs
Anger of astronomers,
Who—you mustn't think it odd—
Are more finicky than God.

So, my dear, you'd better change.
Really, we can't rearrange
Every chart from Mars to Hebe
Just to fit a chit like Phoebe.

Sex, Religion and Business

A young Russian once, in the old nineteenth century days, revisited the town he was born in, and took a look at the people. They seemed stupid—especially the better classes. They had narrow-minded ideas of what was proper and what wasn't. They thought it wasn't proper to love, except in one prescribed way. They worried about money, and social position and customs. The young Russian was sorry for them; he felt they were wasting their lives. His own way of regarding the earth was as a storehouse of treasures—sun, air, great thoughts, great experiences, work, friendship and love. And life was our one priceless chance to delight in all this. I don't say he didn't see much more to life than enjoyment, but he did believe in living richly, and not starving oneself.

The people he met, though, were starving themselves all the time. Certain joys that their natures desired they would not let themselves have, because they had got in the habit of thinking them wrong.

Well, of course this situation is universal; it's everywhere. Most men and women have social and moral ideas which result in their starving their

natures. If they should, well and good. But if not, it is a serious and ridiculous matter. It's especially hard upon those who don't see what they are doing.

I know in my own case that I have been starved, more than once. I'm not starved at the moment; but I'm not getting all I want either. So far as the great joys of life go, I live on a diet. And when something reminds me what splendors there may be, round the corner, I take a look out of the door and begin to feel restless. I dream I see life passing by, and I reach for my hat.

But a man like myself doesn't usually go at all far. His code is too strong—or his habits. Something keeps the door locked. Most of us are that way; we aren't half as free as we seem. When a man has put himself into prison it is hard to get out.

To go back to this Russian, he was in a novel of Artzibashef's, called Sanine. I thought at first that he might release me from my little jail. But it is an odd thing: we victims get particular about being freed. We're unwilling to be released by just any one: it must be the right man. It's too bad to look a savior in the mouth, but it is highly important. This man Sanine, for instance, was for letting me out the wrong door.

I didn't see this at the start. In fact I felt drawn to him. I liked his being silent and caus-

tic and strong in his views. The only thing was, he kept getting a little off-key. There was a mixture of wrongness in his rightness that made me distrust him.

Sanine was in his twenties, and in order to get all the richness that his nature desired, he had to attend to his urgent sexual needs. He wasn't in love, but his sexual needs had to be gratified. In arranging for this he recognized few or no moral restrictions. His idea was that people were apt to make an awful mistake when they tried to build permanent relations out of these fleeting pleasures. Even if there were babies.

These views didn't commend themselves to some of Sanine's neighbors and friends, or to that narrow village. They believed in family-life, and in marrying, and all that kind of thing, and they got no fun at all out of having illegitimate children. They had a lot of prejudices, those people. Sanine gave them a chill. Among them was a young man named Yourii; he's the villain of this book. He was not wicked, but stupid, poor fellow. He was pure and proud of it. I hardly need state that he came to a very bad end. And when they urged Sanine, who was standing there at Yourii's burial, to make some little speech, he replied: "What is there to say? One fool less in the world." This made several people indignant, and the funeral broke up.

A friend of Sanine's named Ivanoff, went with him to the country one day, and they passed some girls bathing in a stream there, without any bathing suits.



He was pure and proud of it

"Let's go and look at them," suggested Sanine.

"They would see us."

"No they wouldn't. We could land there, and go through the reeds."

"Leave them alone," said Ivanoff, blushing slightly. . . . "They're girls . . . young ladies. . . . I don't think it's quite proper."

"You're a silly fool," laughed Sanine. "Do you mean to say that you wouldn't like to see them? What man wouldn't do the same if he had the chance?"

"Yes, but if you reason like that, you ought to watch them openly. Why hide yourself?"

"Because it's much more exciting."

"I dare say, but I advise you not to—"

"For chastity's sake, I suppose?"

"If you like."

"But chastity is the very thing that we don't possess."

Ivanoff smiled, and shrugged his shoulders.

"Look here, my boy," said Sanine, steering toward the bank, "if the sight of girls bathing

were to rouse in you no carnal desire, then you would have the right to be called chaste. Indeed though I should be the last to imitate it, such chastity on your part would win my admiration. But, having these natural desires, if you attempt to suppress them, then I say that your so-called chastity is all humbug."

This was one of the incidents that made me dislike Mr. Sanine. I liked his being honest, and I liked his being down on prudery and humbug. But I thought his theory of life was a good deal too simple. "Don't repress your instincts," he said. That's all very well, but suppose a man has more than one kind? If a cheap peeping instinct says "Look," and another instinct says "Oh, you bounder," which will you suppress? It comes down to a question of values. Life holds moments for most of us which the having been a bounder will spoil.

The harmonizing of body and spirit and all the instincts into one, so we'll have no conflicting desires, is an excellent thing—when we do it; and we can all do it some of the time, with the will and the brains to. But no one can, all the time. And when you are not fully harmonized, and hence feel a conflict—different parts of your nature desiring to go different ways—why, what can you do? You must just take your choice of repressions.

As to Sanine, his life is worth reading, and—in spots—imitating. But I thought he was rather a cabbage. A cabbage is a strong, healthy vegetable, honest and vigorous. It's closely in touch with nature, and it doesn't pretend to be what it isn't. You might do well to study a cabbage: but not follow its program. A cabbage has too much to learn. How our downright young moderns will learn things, I'm sure I don't know. Sanine scornfully says "not by repression." Well, I don't think highly of repressions; they're not the best method. Yet it's possible that they might be just the thing—for a cabbage.

* * *

Long before Sanine was born—in the year 1440 in fact—there was a man in India who used to write religious little songs. Name of Kabir. I tried to read his books once, but couldn't, not liking extremes. He was pretty ecstatic. I could no more keep up with him than with Sanine.

In his private life Kabir was a married man and had several children. By trade he was a weaver. Weaving's like knitting: it allows you to make a living and think of something else at the same time. It was the very thing for Kabir, of course. Gave him practically the whole day to make songs in, and think of religion. He seems to have been a happy fellow—far more so than Sanine.

Sanine's comment would have been that Kabir was living in an imaginary world, not a real one, and that he was autointoxicating himself with his dreamings.



I couldn't keep up with Kabir

Kabir's answer would have been that Sanine ought to try that world before judging it, and had better begin by just loving people a little. More love, and more willingness to deal with his poor fellow-creatures, instead of flinging them off in impatience—that would have been Kabir's prescription. And, as a fact, it might really have been an eye-opener for Sanine.

Of the two, however, I preferred Sanine to Kabir. The trouble with Kabir was, he wouldn't let you alone. He wanted everybody to be as religious as he was: it would make them so happy, he thought. This made him rather screechy.

He sang some songs, however, that moved me. Like many a modern, I'm not religious; that is, I've no creed; but I don't feel quite positive that this army of planets just happened, and that man's

evolution from blindness to thought was an accident and that nowhere is any Intelligence vaster than mine.

Therefore, I'm always hoping to win some real spiritual insight. It has come to other men without dogma (I can't accept dogmas) and so, I keep thinking, it may some day come to me, too. I never really expect it next week, though. It's always far off. It might come, for instance, I think, in the hour of death. And here is the song Kabir sang to all men who think that:

> *"O Friend! hope for Him whilst you live, know whilst you live, understand whilst you live; for in life deliverance abides.*
>
> *"If your bonds be not broken whilst living, what hope of deliverance in death?*
>
> *"It is but an empty dream, that the soul shall have union with Him because it has passed from the body:*
>
> *"If He is found now, He is found then.*
>
> *"If not, we do but go to dwell in the City of Death.*
>
> *"If you have union now, you shall have it hereafter."*

* * *

Both Sanine and Kabir should have read Tarkington's novel, The Turmoil, which is all about the rush and hustle-bustle of life in America.

It would have made them see what great contrasts exist in this world. Kabir thought too much about religion. Sanine, of sex. Nobody in The Turmoil was especially troubled with either. Some went to church, maybe, and sprinkled a little religion here and there on their lives; but none deeply felt it, or woke up in the morning thinking about it, or allowed it to have much say when they made their decisions. And as to sex, though there were lovers among them, it was only incidentally that they cared about that. They satisfied nature in a routine way, outside office hours. No special excitement about it. Nothing hectic—or magical.

Now, sex is a fundamental state and concern of existence: it's a primary matter. If it's pushed to one side, we at least should be careful what does it. And religion, too, God or no God, is a primary matter, if we stretch the word to cover all the spiritual gropings of man. Yet what is it that pushes these two great things aside in America? What makes them subordinate? Business. We put business first.

And what is this business? What is the charm of this giant who engrosses us so? In Tarkington's novel you find yourself in a town of neighborly people, in the middle west somewhere; a leisurely and kindly place—home-like, it used to be called. But in the hearts of these

people was implanted a longing for size. They wished that town to grow. So it did. (We can all have our wishes.) And with its new bigness came an era of machinery and rush. "The streets began to roar and rattle, the houses to tremble, the pavements were worn under the tread of hurrying multitudes. The old, leisurely, quizzical look of the faces was lost in something harder and warier."

"You don't know what it means, keepin' property together these days," says one of them. "I tell you when a man dies the wolves come out of the woods, pack after pack . . . and if that dead man's children ain't on the job, night and day, everything he built'll get carried off. . . . My Lord! when I think of such things coming to *me!* It don't seem like I deserved it—no man ever tried harder to raise his boys right than I have. I planned and planned and planned how to bring 'em up to be guards to drive the wolves off, and how to be builders to build, and build bigger. . . . What's the use of my havin' worked my life and soul into my business, if it's all goin' to be dispersed and scattered, soon as I'm in the ground?"

* * *

Poor old business! It does look pretty sordid. Yet there is a soul in this giant. Consider its power to call forth the keenness in men and to

give endless zest to their toil and sharp trials to their courage. It is grimy, shortsighted, this master—but it has greatness, too.

Only, as we all know, it does push so much else to one side! Love, spiritual gropings, the arts, our old closeness to nature, the independent outlook and disinterested friendships of men—all these must be checked and diminished, lest they interfere. Yet those things are life; and big business is just a great game. Why play any game so intently we forget about life?

Well, looking around at mankind, we see some races don't. The yellow and black—and some Latins. But Normans and Saxons and most Teutons play their games hard. Knight-errantry was once the game. See how hard they played that. The Crusades, too,—all gentlemen were supposed to take in the Crusades. Old, burly, beef-crunching wine-bibbers climbed up on their chargers and went through incredible troubles and dangers—for what? Why, to rescue a shrine, off in Palestine, from the people who lived there. Those people, the Saracens, weren't doing anything very much to it; but still it was thought that no gentleman ought to stay home, or live his life normally, until that bit of land had been rescued, and put in the hands of stout prelates instead of those Saracans.

Then came the great game of exploring new

lands and new worlds. Cortez, Frobisher, Drake. Imagine a dialogue in those days between father and son, a sea-going father who thought exploration was life, and a son who was weakly and didn't want to be forced into business. "I don't like exploration much, Father. I'm seasick the whole time, you know; and I can't bear this going ashore and oppressing the blacks." "Nonsense, boy! This work's got to be done. Can't you see, my dear fellow, those new countries *must* be explored? It'll make a man of you."

So it goes, so it goes. And playing some game well *is* needful, to make a man of you. But once in a while you get thinking it's not quite enough.

An Ode to Trade

"Recent changes in these thoroughfares show that trade is rapidly crowding out vice."— *Real Estate Item.*

O restless Spirit, from whose cup
All drink, and at whose feet all bow
May I inquire what you are up
To now?

Insatiable, I know, your maw,
And ravenous of old your shrine;
But still, O Trade, you ought to draw
The line.

Our health, our pride, our every breath
Of leisure—do not these suffice?
Ah, tell me not you're also death
On vice.

Ah, tell me not yon gilded hell
That has from boyhood soothed my grief
Must fall into the sere and yel-
low leaf;

That dens my wayward comrades know
Must also share this cruel lot:
That every haunt of sin must go
To pot.

I who have seen your roaring marts
Engulf our aristocracy,
Our poets, all who love the arts
But me:

The Crow's Nest

I who have watched your bounteous purse
Seduce, I say, the world's elect—
I, in my clear and ringing verse,
Object.

You've stripped existence to the bone;
You see us of all else bereft;
You know quite well that vice alone
Is left.

You claim our every thought and prayer,
Nor do we grudge the sacrifice.
But worms will turn! You've got to spare
Us vice



Objections to Reading

When I was a child of tender years—about five tender years, I think—I felt I couldn't wait any longer: I wanted to read. My parents had gone along supposing that there was no hurry; and they were quite right; there wasn't. But I was impatient. I couldn't wait for people to read to me—they so often were busy, or they insisted on reading the wrong thing, or stopping too soon. I had an immense curiosity to explore the book-universe, and the only way to do it satisfactorily was to do it myself.

Consequently I got hold of a reader, which said, "See the Dog Run!" It added, "The Dog Can Run and Leap," and stated other curious

facts. "The Apple is Red," was one of them, I remember, and "The Round Ball Can Roll."

There was certainly nothing thrilling about the exclamation, "See the Dog Run!" Dogs run all the time. The performance was too common to speak of. Nevertheless, it did thrill me to spell it out for myself in a book. "The Round Ball Can Roll," said my book. Well, I knew that already. But it was wonderful to have a book say it. It was having books talk to me.

Years went on, and I read more and more. Sometimes, deep in Scott, before dinner, I did not hear the bell, and had to be hunted up by some one and roused from my trance. I hardly knew where I was, when they called me. I got up from my chair not knowing whether it was for dinner or breakfast or for school in the morning. Sometimes, late at night, even after a long day of play—those violent and never-pausing exertions that we call play, in boyhood—I would still try to read, hiding the light, until my eyes closed in spite of me. So far as I knew, there were not many books in the world; but nevertheless I was in a hurry to read all there were.

In this way, I ignorantly fastened a habit upon me. I got like an alcoholic, I could let no day go by without reading. As I grew older, I couldn't pass a book-shop without going in. And in libraries, where reading was free, I always read

to excess. The people around me glorified the habit (just as old songs praise drinking). I never had the slightest suspicion that it might be a vice. I was as complacent over my book totals as six bottle men over theirs.

Can there ever have been a race of beings on some other star, so fascinated as we are by reading? It is a remarkable appetite. It seems to me that it must be peculiar to simians. Would you find the old folks of any other species, with tired old brains, feeling vexed if they didn't get a whole newspaper fresh every morning? Back in primi-



tive times, when men had nothing to read but knots in a string, or painful little pictures on birch

bark—was it the same even then? Probably Mrs. Flint-Arrow, 'way back in the Stone Age pored over letters from her son, as intensely as any one. "Only two knots in it this time," you can almost hear her say to her husband. "Really I think Ak might be a little more frank with his mother. Does it mean he has killed that striped Wumpit in Double Rock Valley, or that the Gouly family where you told him to visit has twins?"

There are one or two primitive ideas we still have about reading. I remember in a boarding-house in Tucson, I once met a young clergyman,



who exemplified the belief many have in the power of books. "Here are you," he would say to me,

"and here is your brain. What are you going to put into it? That is the question." I could



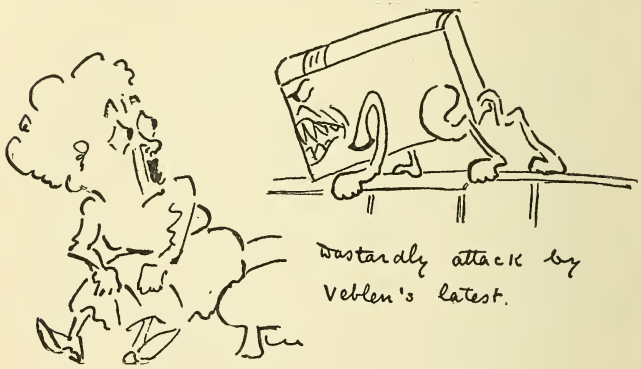
make myself almost as good as a bishop, he intimated, by choosing the noblest and best books, instead of mere novels. One had only to choose the right sort of reading to be the right sort of man.

He seemed to think I had only to read Socrates to make myself wise, or G. Bernard Shaw to be witty.

Cannibals eat the hearts of dead enemy chieftains, to acquire their courage; and this clergyman entered a library with the same simple notion.

But though books are weak implements for implanting good qualities in us, they do color our minds, fill them with pictures and sometimes ideas. There are scenes of horror in my mind to-day

that were put there by Poe, or Ambrose Bierce or somebody, years ago, which I cannot put out.



No maiden in distress would bother me nowadays, I have read of too many, but some of those first ones I read of still make me feel cold. Yes, a book can leave indelible pictures. . . . And it can introduce wild ideas. Take a nice old lady for instance, at ease on her porch, and set the ballads of Villon to grinning at her over the hedge, or a deep-growling Veblen to creeping on her, right down the rail,—it's no wonder they frighten her. She doesn't want books to show her the underworld and blacken her life.

It's not surprising that some books are censored and forbidden to circulate. The surprising thing is that in this illiberal world they travel so freely. But they usually aren't taken seriously; I suppose that's the answer. It's odd. Many

countries that won't admit even the quietest living man without passports will let in the most active, dangerous thoughts in book form.

The habit of reading increases. How far can it go? The innate capacity of our species for it is plainly enormous. Are we building a race of men who will read several books every day, not counting a dozen newspapers at breakfast, and magazines in between? It sounds like a lot, but our own record would have astonished our ancestors. Our descendants are likely to read more and faster than we.

People used to read chiefly for knowledge or to pursue lines of thought. There wasn't so much



fiction as now. These proportions have changed. We read some books to feed our curiosity but

more to feed our emotions. In other words, we moderns are substituting reading for living.

When our ancestors felt restless they burst out of their poor bookless homes, and roamed around looking for adventure. We read some one else's. The only adventures they could find were often unsatisfactory, and the people they met in the course of them were hard to put up with. We can choose just the people and adventures we like in our books. But our ancestors got real emotions, where we live on canned.

Of course canned emotions are thrilling at times, in their way, and wonderful genius has gone into putting them up. But a man going home from a library where he has read of some battle,



has not the sensations of a soldier returning from war.

Objections to Reading

Still—for us—reading is natural. If we were more robust, as a race, or if earth-ways



were kinder, we should not turn so often to books when we wanted more life. But a fragile yet aspiring species on a stormy old star—why, a substitute for living is the very thing such beings need.

On Authors

The Enjoyment of Gloom



There used to be a poem—I wish I could find it again—about a man in a wild, lonely place who had a child and a dog. One day he had to go somewhere. So he left the dog home to protect the child until he came back. The dog was a strong, faithful animal, with large, loving eyes.

Something terrible happened soon after the man had gone off. I find I'm rather hazy about it, but I think it was wolves. The faithful dog had an awful time of it. He fought and he fought. He was pitifully cut up and bitten. In the end, though, he won.

The man came back when it was night. The dog was lying on the bed with the child he had saved. There was blood on the bed. The man's heart stood still. "This blood is my child's," he thought hastily, "and this dog, which I trusted,

has killed it." The dog feebly wagged his tail. The man sprang upon him and slew him.

He saw his mistake immediately afterward, but—it was too late.

When I first read this I was a boy of perhaps ten or twelve. It darn near made me cry. There was one line especially—the poor dog's dying howl of reproach. I think it did make me cry.

I at once took the book—a large, blue one—and hunted up my younger brothers. I made them sit one on each side of the nursery fire. "I'm going to read you something," I said.



"Keep all the wolves out now."

They looked up at me trustfully. I remember their soft, chubby faces.

I began the poem, very much moved; and they too, soon grew agitated. They had a complete



Reading about the poor dog.

confidence, however, that it would come out all right. When it didn't, when the dog's dying howl came, they burst into tears. We all sobbed together.

This session was such a success that I read it to them several times afterward. I didn't get quite so much poignancy out of these encores myself but my little brothers cried every time, and that, somehow, gave me pleasure. It gave no pleasure to them. They earnestly begged me not to keep reading it. I was the eldest, however, and paid little attention, of course, to their wishes. They'd be playing some game, perhaps.

I would stalk into the room, book in hand, and sit them down by the fire. "You're going to read us about the dog again?" they would wail. "Well, not right away," I'd say. "I'll read something funny to start with." This didn't much cheer them. "Oh, please don't read us about the dog, please don't," they'd beg, "we're playing run-around." When I opened the book they'd begin crying 'way in advance, long before that stanza came describing his last dying howl.

It was kind of mean of me.

There's a famous old author, though, who's been doing just that all his life. He's eighty years old, and still at it. I mean Thomas Hardy. Dying howls, of all kinds, are his specialty.

His critics have assumed that from this they can infer his philosophy. They say he believes that "sorrow is the rule and joy the exception," and that "good-will and courage and honesty are brittle weapons" for us to use in our defense as we pass through such a world.

I'm not sure that I agree that that's Hardy's philosophy. It's fair enough to say that Hardy's stories, and still more his poems, paint chiefly the gloomy and hopeless situations in life, just as Mark Twain and Aristophanes painted the comic ones. But Mark Twain was very far from thinking the world was a joke, and I doubt

whether Hardy regards it at heart as so black.

He has written—how many books? twenty odd?—novels and poems. They make quite an edifice. They represent long years of work. Could he have been so industrious if he had found the world a chamber of horrors? He might have done one or two novels or poems about it, but how could he have kept on if he had truly felt the whole thing was hopeless? He kept on, because although sorrows move him he does not feel their weight. He found he could have a good time painting the world's tragic aspects. He is somehow or other so constituted that that's been his pleasure. And he has wanted his own kind of pleasure, just as you and I want our kinds. That's fair.

I like to think that the good old soul has had a lot of fun all his life, describing all the gloomiest episodes a person could think of. If a good, gloomy episode comes into his mind while he's shaving, it brightens the whole day, and he bustles off to set it down, whistling.

Somebody once asked him if he were as pessimistic as his writings would indicate, and he replied that it wasn't safe to judge a man's thoughts by his writings. His writings showed only what kind of things he liked to describe. "Some authors become vocal before one aspect of life, some another." (Perhaps not his exact words

but close to it.) One aspect of life may impress you, yet leave you in silence; another may stimulate you into saying something; but what does that prove? It merely shows what you like best to talk about, not your philosophy. A cat whose life is principally peace and good food and warm fires makes hardly any noise about those things—at most a mere purr. But she does become vocal and wildly so, over midnight encounters. If another cat so much as disputes her way on a fence-top, her tragic shrieks of anguish will sound like the end of the world. Well, Hardy has spent his life in what was chiefly a peaceful era of history, in a liberal and prosperous country; and he personally, too, has had blessings—the blessing of being able, for instance, to write really good books, and the blessing of finding a public to read and admire them. Is any of this reflected in his themes, though? Does he purr? Mighty little. No, he prefers looking around for trouble in this old world's backyards; he prowls about at night till he comes upon some good hunk of bleakness, and then he sits down, like the cat, to utter long-drawn-out wails, which give him strange, poignant sensations of deep satisfaction. They give us quite other sensations but he doesn't care. In the morning he canters back in, pleased and happy, for breakfast, and he basks in the sun, blinking sagely, the rest of the day. And

we say, with respect, "A great pessimist; he thinks life is all sorrow."

The principal objection to pessimists is they sap a man's hope. As some English writer has said, there are two kinds of hope. First, the hope of success, which gives men daring, and helps them win against odds. That isn't the best sort of hope. Many deliberately cultivate it because it makes for success, but that is an insincere habit; it's really self-hypnotism. It may help us to win in some particular enterprise, yes; but it's dangerous, like drug-taking. You must keep on increasing the dose, and blind-folding your reason. Men who do it are buoyant, self-confident, but some of their integrity is lost.

The best kind of hope is not about success in this or that undertaking. It's far deeper; hence when things go against you, it isn't destroyed. It is hope about the nature and future of man and the universe. It is this hope the pessimists would disallow. That's why they repel us. Some lessen our hope in the universe; others, in man.

Buffoon Fate

Suppose that a lot of us were living aboard a huge ship. Suppose the ship didn't rock much, or require any urgent attention, but kept along on an even keel and left us free to do as we liked. And suppose we got into the habit of staying below more and more, never coming up on deck or regarding the sea or the sky. Just played around below, working at little jobs; eating, starving, quarreling, and arguing in the hold of that ship.

And then, maybe, something would happen to call us on deck. Some peril, some storm. And we'd suddenly realize that our life between decks wasn't all. We'd run up and rub our eyes, and stare around at the black waters, the vast, heaving waves; and a gale from far spaces would strike us, and chill us like ice. And we'd think, "By Jove, we're on a ship! And where is our ship sailing?"

Wars, plagues and famines are the storms that make us run up on deck. They snatch us up, out of our buying and selling and studying, and show us our whole human enterprise as a ship, in great danger.

We want to scurry back below, where it's lighted and smaller. Down below where our toys

are. On deck it's too vast, too tremendous. . . .

We want to forget that the human race is on an adventure, sailing no one knows where, on a magical, treacherous sea.

We have fought our way up from being wild, houseless lemurs, or lower, and little by little we have built up our curious structure—of learning, of art, of discovery—a wonderful structure: at least for us monkey-men. It has been a long struggle. We can guess, looking backward, what our ancestors had to contend with—how the cavemen fought mammoths, and their tough sons and daughters fought barbarism. But we want to forget it. We wish every one now to be genial. We pretend that this isn't the same earth that our ancestors lived on, but quite a different planet, where roughness is kept within bounds and where persons wear gloves and have neat wooden doors they can lock.

But it's the very same earth that old Grandpa Caveman once wrestled with, and where old Grandma Cavewoman ran for her life twice a week.

We've varnished the surface.

But it's still wild and strange just beneath.

In a book called "The War in the Air," by H. G. Wells (1907) he pictures the world swimming along quietly, when bang! a war starts! And it spreads, and takes in East and West, smashes

cities, stops everything. And one of the young men in the story looks around rather dazed, and says in a low voice: "I've always thought life was a lark. It isn't. This sort of thing has always been happening, I suppose—these things, wars and earthquakes, that sweep across all the decency of life. It's just as though I had woke up to it all for the first time. . . . And it's always been so—it's the way of life."

So that's what we need to get used to, that it's *that* kind of a ship. We ought to have a sense of the adventure on which we're all bound.

* * *

It's not only war—not by a long shot—that gives men that sense. Great scientists have it. Great sailors. You can sort out the statesmen around you, the writers, the poets, according to whether or not they ever have been up on deck.

Theodore Dreiser has, for instance; Arnold Bennett has not. Charles Dickens did not, and that's why he is ranked below Thackeray. Compare James Joyce's "Portrait of the Artist" with George Moore's "Confessions," and if you apply this criterion, Moore takes a back seat.

* * *

There's one great man now living, however, who has almost too much of this sense: this cosmic adventure emotion. And that man's Joseph Conrad. Perhaps in his youth the sea came upon

him too suddenly, or his boyhood sea-dreams awed too deeply his then unformed mind. At all events, the men in his stories are like lonely spirits, sailing, spellbound, through the immense forces surrounding the world. "There they are," one of them says, as he stands at the rail, "stars, sun, sea, light, darkness, space, great waters; the formidable Work of the Seven Days, into which man seems to have blundered unbidden. Or else decoyed."

We all have that mood. But Conrad, he's given to brooding. And his habit at night when he stands staring up at the stars is to see (or conjure up rather) a dumb buffoon Fate, primeval, unfriendly and stupid, whom Man must defy. And Conrad defies it, but wearily, for he feels sick at heart,—because of his surety that Fate is ignoble, and blind.

It's as though the man told himself ghost stories about this great universe. He feels that it ought to have a gracious and powerful master, leading men along fiery highways to test but not crush them, and marching them firm-eyed and glorious toward high goals. But instead there is nothing. The gray, empty wastes of the skies beyond starland are silent. Or, worse, their one sound is the footfall of that buffoon Fate.

The way to meet this black situation, according to Conrad, is to face it with grim steady cour-

age. And that's what he does. It's stirring to discover the fineness of this man's tragic bravery. But when I get loose from his spell, and reflect, independently, I ask myself, "After all, is this performance so brave?"

We must all weigh the universe, each in his own penny-scales, and decide for ourselves whether to regard it as inspiring or hollow. But letting our penny-scales frighten us isn't stout-hearted.

If I were to tell myself ghost stories until I was trembling, and then, with my heart turning cold, firmly walk through the dark, my courage would be splendid, no doubt, but not finely applied. Conrad's courage is splendid—it is as great as almost any modern's—but it isn't courageous of him to busy it with self-conjured dreads.

The Wrong Lampman

It is odd, or no, it's not, but it's note-worthy, that Shaw has had few disciples. Here is a witty, vivacious man, successful and keen: why isn't he the head of a school of other keen, witty writers? He has provided an attractive form—the play with an essay as preface. He has provided stock characters, such as the handsome-hero male-moth, who protests so indignantly at the fatal attraction of candles. He has developed above all that useful formula which has served many a dramatist—the comic confrontation of reason and instinct in man. Yet this whole apparatus lies idle, except for the use that Shaw makes of it. It is as though Henry Ford had perfected an automobile, and then no one had taken a drive in it, ever, but Henry.

The explanation that Shaw's is too good a machine, or that it takes a genius to run it, is not sufficiently plausible. The truth probably is that his shiny car has some bad defect.

It has this defect certainly: in all his long arguments, Shaw has one underlying assumption—that men could be perfectly reasonable and wise if they would. They have only to let themselves;

and if they won't, it's downright perversity. This belief is at the center of his being, and he can't get away from it. He doesn't hold it lightly: he's really in earnest about it. Naturally, when he looks around at the world with that belief in his heart, and sees men and women making blunders which he thinks they don't need to, he becomes too exasperated for silence, and pours out his plays. Sometimes he is philosophic enough to treat his fellows amusedly; sometimes he is serious and exacerbated, in which case he is tiresome. But at heart he is always provoked and astonished at men for the way they fend off the millennium, when it's right at their side.

He may have inherited this attitude from those economists, who flourished, or attempted to flourish, in the generation before him—those who built with such confidence on rationalism in human affairs. Man was a reasonable being, they said and believed; and all would be well with him, therefore, when he once saw the light. To discover the light might be difficult, but they would do all that for us, and then it would surely be no trouble to man to accept it. They proceeded to discover the light in finance, trade, and matters of government; and Shaw, coming after them, extended the field into marriage, and explained to us the rational thing to do in social relations. These numerous doses of what was confidently recom-

mended as reason were faithfully swallowed by all of us; and yet we're not changed. The dose was as pure as these doctors were able to make it. But—reason needs admixtures of other things to be a good dose. Men have learned that without these confirmings it's not to be trusted.

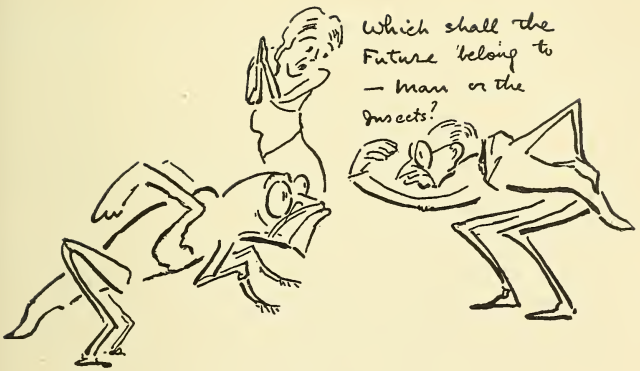
The turn that psychology has taken during the last twenty years has naturally been unlucky for Shaw as a leader, or influence. He appears now as the culminating figure of an old school of thinkers, instead of the founder of a new. And that old school is dead. It was so fascinated by reason or what it believed to be such (for we should not assume that its conceptions, even of reason, were right), that it never properly studied or faced human nature.

Civilization is a process, not a trick to be learned overnight. It is a way of behavior which we super-animals adopt bit by bit. The surprising and hopeful thing is that we adopt it at all. Civilization is the slow modification of our old feral qualities, the slow growth of others, which we test, then discard or retain. An occasional invention seems to hasten things, but chiefly externally; for the internal change in men's natures is slower than glaciers, and it is upon the sum of men's natures that civilization depends. While this testing and churning and gradual molding goes on, some fellow is always holding up a hasty lamp he

calls reason, and beckoning the glacier one side, like a will-o'-the-wisp.

Shaw's lamp of reason is one that has an extra fine glitter; it makes everything look perfectly simple; it shows us short-cuts. He recommends it as a substitute for understanding, which he does not manufacture. Understanding is slow, and is always pointing to the longest way round.

Shaw has studied the ways of mankind, but without enough sympathy. It is unlucky, both for him and for us, this is so. Sympathy would have made him humorous and wise, and then what a friend he'd have been to us. Instead, being brilliant and witty, he has left us unnourished.



The Seamy Side of Fabre

This is an essay on Fabre—that lovable and charming old Frenchman who wrote about insects. *I* don't say he's lovable, mind you, but that's how he is always described.

He was one of those fortunate men who are born with a gift of some sort. His gift was for interpretation, but it worked well in only one field. Every animal, vegetable and mineral finds an interpreter, sooner or later; some man who so loves them that he understands them and their story, and finds ways of telling it to the rest of mankind—if they'll let him. Fabre was born with a peculiar understanding of insects.

Even as a baby he was fascinated by grass-

hoppers and beetles. As a child he wished to study them far more than anything else. He should have been encouraged to do this: allowed to, at any rate. Any child with a gift, even for beetles, should be allowed to develop it. But this small boy was born in a place where his gift was despised; he was torn away from his insects and put through the mill.

Our great blundering old world is always searching for learning and riches, and everlastingly crushing underfoot all new riches and learning. It tried to make Fabre, a born lover of nature, desert her; it forced him to teach mathematics for decades instead. The first thing the world does to a genius is to make him lose all his youth.

Well, Fabre, after losing his youth, and his middle age too, and after being duly kept back at every turn, all his life, by the want of a few extra francs, finally won out at sixty. That is to say, he then got a chance to study and write about insects, in a tiny country home, with an income that was tinier still. "It is a little late, O my pretty insects," he said; "I greatly fear the peach is offered to me only when I'm beginning to have no teeth wherewith to eat it."

As it turned out, however, this wasn't true. He had not only plenty of time, but in my opinion, too much. He lived to be over ninety and he wrote and he wrote and he wrote: he wrote more about

insects than any one man or woman can read. I consider it lucky that he didn't begin until sixty.

Insects, as every one knows, are the worst foes of man. Fabre not only studied these implacable beings but loved them. There was something unnatural about it; something disloyal to the whole human race. It is probable that Fabre was not really human at all. He may have been found in some human cradle, but he was a changeling. You can see he has insect blood in him, if you look at his photograph. He is leathery, agile, dried up. And his grandmother was waspish. He himself always felt strangely close to wasps, and so did wasps to him. I dare say that in addition to Fabre's "Life of the Wasp," there exists, if we could only get at it, a wasp's Life of Fabre.

If the wasp wrote as Fabre does, he would describe Fabre's birth, death, and matings, but tell us hardly anything else about Fabre's real life. He would dwell chiefly on Fabre's small daily habits and his reactions to the wasp's interference.

"Desirous of ascertaining what the old Fabre would do if stung," writes the wasp, "I repeatedly stuck my sting in his leg—but without any effect. I afterward discovered however I had been stinging his boots. This was one of my difficulties, to tell boots and Fabre apart, each having a tough wizened quality and a powdery taste.

"The old Fabre went into his wooden nest or house after this, and presently sat down to eat one of his so-called meals. I couldn't see an atom of dung on the table however, and though there were some fairly edible flowers he never once sucked them. He had only an immense brown root called a potato, and a 'chop' of some cow. Seizing a prong in his claws, the old Fabre quickly harpooned this 'chop' and proceeded to rend it, working his curious mandibles with sounds of delight, and making a sort of low barking talk to his mate. Their marriage, to me, seemed unnatural. Although I watched closely for a week this mate laid no eggs for him: and instead of saving food for their larvæ they ate it all up themselves. How strange that these humans should differ so much from us wasps!"

Another life of Fabre that we ought to have is one by his family. *They* were not devoted to insects; they probably loathed them; and yet they had to get up every morning and spend the whole day nursing bugs. I picture them, yawning and snarling over the tedious experiments, and listening desperately to Fabre's coleopterous chatter. The members of every famous man's family ought to give us their side of it. I want more about Tolstoy by Mrs. Tolstoy. And a Life of Milton by his daughters. That picture of those unfortu-

nate daughters, looking so sweet and devoted, taking the blind poet's dictation, is—must be—deceptive. They were probably wanting to go off upstairs, all the time, and try new ways of doing their hair; or go out and talk their heads off with other girls, or look in shop windows: anything but take down old Mr. Milton's poetry all day. They didn't know their papa was a classic: they just thought that he was the longest-winded papa in their street. I have no warrant for saying this, I may add. Except that it's human nature. . . .

Fabre has his good points. He is imaginative and dramatic, and yet has a passion for truth. He is a philosopher, an artist. And above all he is not sentimental. He is fond of his insects, but he never is foolishly fond. And sometimes the good old soul is as callous as can be toward caterpillars. He shows no more bowels towards caterpillars than do his own wasps. Take, for instance, that experiment when he kept some on the march for eight days, watching them interestedly as they died of exhaustion. Or his delight at the way caterpillars are eaten by the Eumenes wasp.

This wasp shuts its egg up in a large, prison-like cell, with a pile of live caterpillars beside it, to serve as its food, first half-paralyzing these victims so they will keep still. Alive but unable to move, the caterpillars lie there till the grub

hatches out. (Dead caterpillars wouldn't do because this little grub loves fresh meat.)

The grub, hanging by a thread from the ceiling, now begins having dinner. "Head downward it is digging into the limp belly of one of the caterpillars," says Fabre. "The caterpillars grow restless," he adds. (There's a fine brutal touch!) The grub thereupon, to Fabre's delight, climbs back up its thread. It is only a baby; it's tender; and when those wretched caterpillars get to thrashing around, they might hurt the sweet infant. Not till "peace" is restored, Fabre adds, does Baby dare to come down again. Hideous infantile epicure! It takes another good juicy bite.

And if its dinner moans again, or wriggles, it again climbs back up.

Imagine some caterpillar reader shuddering at this horror—this lethal chamber where prominent caterpillars are slowly eaten alive. Yet scenes like this occur all through Fabre, and are described with great relish. If he wrote of them in a dry professional way, it would sound scientific, and I could read it in a cool, detached spirit with never a flutter. But he does it so humanly that you get to be friends with these creatures, and then he springs some grisly little scene on you that gives you the creeps, and explains to you that the said little scene is going on all the time; and it makes

you feel as though there were nothing but red fangs in the world.

Fabre at one time was offered the post of tutor to Napoleon III's son, but he preferred to live in poverty in the country, where he could keep up his studies. No money, no honors could tempt him away from his work. Perhaps this was noble. But it seems to me he made a mistake. In fact, this was the greatest and most fatal mistake of his life.

If he had gone to Napoleon, he might have moped awhile at first, and felt guilty. But he would have gone right on loving insects and wanting to study them. Hence he would have soon begun looking around the palace for specimens. And this might have led to his discovering riches indoors.

Suppose he had written about that bug that takes its name from our beds, and helped us to understand its persistent devotion to man. According to Ealand, the scientist, they are not wholly bad. They were once supposed to be good for hysteria if taken internally. The Ancients gave seven to adults and four to children, he says, "to cure lethargy." But the best Ealand can do is to give us bits of information like this, whereas Fabre, if he had lived in his bedroom, could have been their interpreter.

That's his failure—his books are over-

weighted with bugs of the fields. I have plowed through long chapters without getting away for a minute from beetles. In bugs of the field I take a due interest (which, I may add, isn't much), but the need of humanity is to know about bugs of the home.



In His Baby Blue Ship

There are some people who can't enjoy fairy-stories, and don't like imagining. They are a bit too hard-headed. I don't blame such people; they are all right enough in their way. Only they ought not to go around saying fairy-stories are silly. They ought simply to let them alone and live nice hard-headed lives.

It is the same way with soft-headed people who cannot enjoy the real world. Not having much taste for it, and not getting on too well in it, they are apt to call it pretty bad names and to wish it were different. I think them too hasty. Before they abuse or advise it they should first understand it. If they can't, they should let it alone more, and live in their dreams.

Or in those of such dreamers as Maeterlinck, Dunsany, or Poe.

The Maeterlinck books constitute quite a beautiful country. They have long been a favorite home for our soft-headed friends. And those of us who are of a compound between hard and soft enjoy visiting the Maeterlinck coast as we might a resort. It is pleasantly unreal; it is varied.

Gentle breezes of sweetness; blue seas, massive rocks; and storms too. Here and there a crag, or dark castle of terrible grandeur. Is it not picturesque? Don't poke at the castles with your umbrella; you might go through the tin; but take it all in the right spirit as you would Coney Island.

Human nature being what it is, there is certainly a need for this place.

There is one little difficulty about the situation however. Monsieur Maeterlinck, the proprietor, although he makes his home in this region, likes sometimes to visit the real world, if but for a change. Well, this would be nothing to object to, though for him injudicious, but he is such a stranger there that he does not at all know his place. He takes himself seriously at his home; it is natural, I'm sure; but it leads him to speak in the real world with a voice of authority. He is not in the least offensive about it, no one could be more gentle, but he doesn't at all realize that his rank here permits no such tone. On the Maeterlinck coast, in the realms of romance, he is king. In the real world his judgments are not above those of a child.

It would give me more pleasure (or at any rate it ought to, I know) to dwell on his many abilities than on this one fault. But this excellent man has the misfortune to resemble wood-alco-

hol. Wood-alcohol is a respectable liquid; it is useful in varnish; when poured in a lamp it heats tea; yes, it has its good side. Yet how little we dwell on its uses, how much on its defect; its one small defect that it's fatal when taken internally.

Maeterlinck has for years made a business of beautiful thoughts. With some of them he built romantic tales that are or were a refreshment. But others he embodied in sermons addressed to reality. He told us none needed to go to his coast for romance, or for purity and beauty and goodness, for we really were full of them. We were made in fact of just these ingredients, at least in our hearts; and it followed, he said, that our actions should be chosen accordingly. Without ever having learned anything much of mankind, he described just the way that he felt all mankind should behave. He put on the robes of a sage, and he sweetened his looks, and his voice became tender and thrilling and rather impressive; and he wrote about the Treasure of the Humble, and Wisdom and Destiny.

The real world is not easy to live in. It is rough; it is slippery. Without the most clear-eyed adjustments we fall and get crushed. A man must stay sober: not always, but most of the time. Those of us who drink from the flasks of the sages of dreamland become so intoxicated with guff we are a peril to everyone.

We trust in Hague tribunals for instance, on the eve of great wars.

The flask that Wood-Alcohol Maurice, if I may so call him, held so long to our lips in the years before 1914, produced the usual effects of joy first, and then blindness and coma. I speak from experience. I took some myself and was poisoned, and I knew other cases. But it poisoned poor Maeterlinck more—I may say, most of all—for he had taken his own medicine honorably as fast as he mixed it. Owing to this imprudence, he found himself, in 1914, in such a deep coma it almost killed him to come out of it. His anger at having to wake up and face things was loud. He found himself compelled to live for a while in the midst of hard facts, and his comments upon them were scathing; as all dreamers' are.

Since then he has gone part-way back to the land of romance, and if he will stay there I shall not prefer charges against him. He is one of the masters of fancy. He can mine fairy gold. But any time he comes to this world we're now learning to live in, or offers us any more mail-order lessons in sweetness, I think we should urge him to go and stay where he belongs.

There is a poem by Joaquin Miller about Columbus that describes his long voyage. It consists, as I remember, entirely of groans by the sailors,

who keep asking Columbus whether he will please let them turn back. But Columbus never has but one answer, and that is "Sail on." He says "Sail on, sail on," over and over again, at the end of each stanza. I grant you it must have been monotonous enough to the crew, who after the first week or two probably knew it by heart; but never mind, it sounds well to us. It's especially good when declaimed. I don't suppose Columbus himself climbed the poop and declaimed it; he merely stopped shaving, stuck his head out of the chart-room and screeched it,—suitably mixed with whatever profanities his day could command. But Time, which softens all homely history, has beautified this. All the boy Columbuses I ever heard recite it, when I was at school, had as noble a way as one could ask of telling their crews to sail on.

I did not mean to make so long a digression. To get back to Maeterlinck. We ought to provide him with a beautiful baby-blue ship. Odd, charming allegorical figures should sit on the decks, and fenders should hang from the sides to ward off bumps of truth. Astern he might tow a small wife-boat, as a mariner should, with its passenger capacity carefully stamped on the bottom. And instead of Columbus, a honey-fed spirit of dream should stand in his prow and adjure him to sail on, to dreamland. "Dream on, dream

on, dream on," she should patter, each time he grew restless. I could not take a turn in the prow myself, it would be too much honor; but I should be glad to take my stand in the gentleman's rear, and do all I could to accelerate his progress from thence.



Problems

The Man Who Knew Gods

His case illustrated the risks explorers run. Not the physical risks, which are overestimated, but the psychological dangers. For years he had lived among savages, observing their ways, and owing to this he had fallen into a completely detached mental habit. When he returned to civilization, he had become a confirmed looker-on. He couldn't get back into touch with us. He remained an outsider.

I met him but once myself. I was in the publishing business at the time, and, hearing that this man was in New York, I thought I might as well see him about his next book. Telephoning him, therefore, at his hotel, I asked him to dine with me on the following Friday.

"Fri-day?" he replied. "What is 'Friday'?" (He spoke English perfectly.)

"It is the twenty-sixth," I answered.

He said: "The twenty-sixth what? Oh, I know," he continued; "Friday is a day of the week. Thank you very much, but I do not keep track of my dinners so carefully as that."

This rather odd answer I passed over, at the

moment, thinking I had misunderstood him; and we arranged that he would come some day to my office instead, after lunch.

The next that I heard, he had called there at a quarter to five, the hour at which I always leave. My secretary explained to him that I had gone.

He looked at my desk, on which lay some unfinished business, and said to my secretary, "Why?"

The man courteously responded, "Because it is a quarter to five."

The explorer thereat laughed weirdly and went off.

I now perceived I had to deal with a most eccentric character; but that being a necessary evil in the publishing business, I went to his hotel at nine o'clock that evening. I found him down in the restaurant eating oatmeal and succotash, and we then and there had the following extravagant interview,—which I give without comment.

"The book *I* mean to write," he said, staring at me, "is a study of actual religions. Other writers have told the world what men of all countries suppose their religions to be. I shall tell what they really are."

I said that our house would prefer an account of his travels; but he paid no attention.

"Men's real religions," he announced, "are unknown to themselves. You may have heard of the Waam Islanders," he leisurely continued. "They, for instance, would tell you that their deity was an idol called Bashwa, a large crumbling stone thing which stands in a copperwood forest. They worship this idol most faithfully, on the first of each lunar month. No Waam Islander would ever acknowledge he had any other God but Bashwa.

"But a stranger soon notices that in every hut and cave in that country, hanging beside the water-jar, is a long sleeping mat, and on that mat a rough pattern is drawn, like a face. 'What is that?' I asked them. 'That? oh, that's G'il,' they answered in an off-hand careless way, without any of the reverence they would have used if they had thought G'il a god. But nevertheless I noted that everywhere, throughout that whole island, submissive remarks about G'il, were far more numerous than those about Bashwa. That made me begin collecting those references; and presently I found that most things of which that tribe approved were spoken of as being g'il, or very g'il, and things they didn't like were damned as na-g'il.

"It was a little difficult to understand their exact conception of G'il, but apparently it typified

the hut, or the hut point of view. Marriage was g'il, and good manners and building materials, because they all made for hut-life. Inhospitality was na-g'il, and the infidelity of women, and earthquakes, and leaks.

"They sometimes personified G'il and talked of him as he. 'G'il loves not Wheesha' (the wind); 'G'il comforts the weary'; 'G'il says, "Get more children."' But all this was only in their fanciful moments. At other times G'il was merely the mat that they slept on. When I said to them, 'G'il is your real God,' they laughed at my stupidity—good humoredly, as though there were something, perhaps, in my idea, yet with a complacent assurance that I was preposterous. I did not argue with them. One couldn't, you know. I simply continued my observations, corroborating my theory at every turn. To give you an instance: Bashwa is supposed to think highly of hunters and sailors, and the Waam-folk always profess to think highly of them too. That attitude, however, is only official, not real. Very few of them actually become sailors. The life is na-g'il."

He came to a pause.

"I wonder whether we, too, have a G'il," I said, to humor him. "We shall have to ask

some of your Waam-folk to come here and tell us."

The explorer looked me over as though he were "continuing his observations" of *my* manners and customs. "Yes," he said, "there's a white man's G'il."

I regretted having mentioned it.

"Can't you guess what he is?" he inquired. "I say 'he' because, like the Waam G'il, he is sometimes personified. Come now! Apply the test. He doesn't typify the Waam Islander point of view: he isn't a mat. But examine your huts and your conversation, and you'll easily spot him. No, I'm not talking of money, or power, or success: you may bow down to these,—but not blindly. You at least know what you are doing. The worship of a G'il is unconscious, and hence more insidious. Even when an explorer points it out, you won't see its importance. It will seem insignificant to you. And yet, while the Bashwa to whom you build temples is only occasionally deferred to, this G'il of yours sways you in all things. He is the first whom you think of when you rise, and the last when you go to bed. You speak of your G'il hourly or oftener, all day long. Those of you who heed him too little are disapproved of by everybody, while the American who succeeds

in life is the man who is most careful of G'il.

"I have habits," he morosely continued, "of doing certain things,—eating my meals for instance, —at quite different hours from those that are prevalent here. I find that every one who hears of this is surprised at my ways. Their attitude, while not openly intolerant, is distinctly disapproving. When I ask them why, I get no answer—no rational answer. They say simply, 'It's the wrong time.' Following up this clue I have noticed that not only is the time for performing an act supposed to be sometimes 'wrong' and sometimes 'right,' but that the idea of time governs all of you, like an absolute tyrant. Even your so-called free-thinkers, who lead a life without God, never dream of daring to live without a clock and a calendar. And just as the Waam-folk are unconsciously obsessed by their hut-thought, and see everything from that angle, so you have drifted into an exaggerated pre-occupation with time. No matter what you may want to do, you first look at the clock, to see if it is the right time for doing it: if it isn't, you wait. You feel that you 'ought' to. . . . And each caste among you has its own hours. A difference of thirty minutes in the hour at which a family has dinner, marks a difference in their social scale. 'There isn't time,' you sigh, sub-

missively, when you give up something you'd like to do. 'Time is money,' is one of your phrases. 'Give me time,' is your prayer. Your big books of maxims are full of the respect you feel toward him. 'The greatest crime is loss of time.' 'Time flies.' 'Time waits for no man.' These are only small instances, but their total effect is not small, for it is life itself that you sacrifice to this fetish. Your G'il actually won't let you take good full draughts of existence—he keeps you so busy dividing it into months, days, and minutes. You imagine that it is because you lead crowded lives that you do it. But it is because you're always thinking of time that you lead crowded lives.

"You are smiling at me good humoredly, my friend. I see that, like the Waam Islanders, you think I am preposterous. It is the old story. You cannot view yourself from without. You will admit that considerations of time enter into all your acts, and yet—this seems trivial? And it is inconceivable to you that you are its slaves?"

"My dear sir," I interposed, "a strict observance of the laws of time enables a man to live a much fuller life."

"It is what all devotees say of all gods," he murmured.

"We are not its slaves," I continued. "That's absurd. We have only a sensible regard for it, as every one must."

"Ah! ah!" he cried. "But you do not say 'one must' when your Bashwa speaks.

"Your Bashwa thinks highly of those who do good works without ceasing. You profess to think highly of them too; that is your official attitude. In reality, how very few of you lead that life. It happens to be na-g'il, you see. You haven't the time.

"Look about you if you would convince yourself. The concrete evidence alone is enough. On the breasts or the wrists of your women, and in every man's pocket you see a G'il amulet, a watch, to remind them of time every hour. What other god was ever so faithfully worshipped? In every hut in the land you will find his altar, and in your large huts you will find one in every principal room. No matter how free and unconventional their owners may be, no matter how those rooms may vary in their arrangement or furnishings, there stands always in the most prominent place the thing called the mantel; on it, ceremonially flanked by two candlesticks, or vases, sits G'il, the timepiece; and his is the face of all others you most frequently consult. Blind and idolatrous tribesman! time is your deity!"

Well, that's all there was to our interview, for at this point he came to a pause and I rose to leave, explaining to him, soothingly (though I must confess it had a strangely opposite effect) that I had to go because it was getting so late.

Annual Report of the League for Improving the Lives of the Rich

To begin with, there is one objection that is constantly made to the work of this League. Our critics do not understand why we do so much for the rich. They grant that many rich people are unhappy and lead miserable lives; but they argue that if they suffer from riches, it must be their own fault. Nobody would have to stay rich, they say, if he would just make an effort: and if he has too much money and yet won't give it away, he must be a bad lot.

We believe these assertions are mistaken in every particular. The rich are not really a bad lot. We must not judge by appearances. If it weren't for their money they would be indistinguishable from the rest of us. But money brings out their weaknesses, naturally. Would it not bring out ours? A moderate addiction to money may not always be hurtful; but when taken in excess it is nearly always bad for the health, it limits one's chance of indulging in nice simple pleasures, and in many cases it lowers the whole moral tone. The rich admit this—of each other; but what can they do? Once a man has begun to accumulate

money, it is unnatural to stop. He actually gets in a state where he wants more and more.

This may seem incomprehensible to those who have never suffered from affluence, and yet they would feel the same way, in a millionaire's place. A man begins by thinking that *he* can have money without being its victim. He will admit that other men addicted to wealth find it hard to be moderate, but he always is convinced that he is different and has more self-control. But the growth of an appetite is determined by nature, not men, and this is as true of getting money as of anything else. As soon as a man is used to a certain amount, no matter how large, his ideas of what is suitable expand. That is the way men are made.

Meanwhile the mere having of money has the effect on most men of insidiously making them more and more dependent on having it. Of course a man will hate to believe that this is true of himself, but sooner or later money affects him as drugs do a dope-fiend. It is not really much joy to him, but it scares him to think of giving it up. When you urge a rich man to pull himself together, to summon his manhood and try, only *try,* for a while to depend on himself, he tells you he'd like to, perhaps, but he hasn't the strength. He can't take life that way. He can't face the world even a month without money in the bank.

Even so, why should the rest of us feel it's our duty to help? Why not wait until the rich come

to ask our advice, if they're troubled? Ah, but they wouldn't. They couldn't. The rich have their pride. Their unfortunate weakness for money may blacken their lives, but they suffer in silence. They try to conceal it all from us. Their feverish attempts to find some sunshine in life every evening, the desperate and futile migrations they make each few months, and the pathetic mental deadness of their gatherings, they try to keep private. We might never know to what straits many rich folk have come, were it not for the newspapers and their kindly society columns. Bless their noble insistence on showing us the lives of the rich, their portraying with such faithful care each detail of their ways!

It is no easy matter to reform these rich people offhand. Just to call at their houses and advise them, when you aren't too busy—that would be a kindness, of course, but quite far from a cure. Besides, they might even resent your little calls as intrusions. A good-hearted reformer would certainly endanger his comfort, and he might risk his life, trying to get in past rich people's butlers. Don't go in those districts at all, that is this League's advice. The drinking, bad language, the quarrels and shooting affrays, armed watchmen, fast motors—all these make those streets quite unsuited for decent folks' use.

What, then, shall we do? We can't just walk

selfishly off and go mind our own business. The rich are our brothers. How can the rest of us let ourselves be truly happy when our brothers are suffering?

That's where this League steps forward. This League will provide ways in which any reformer can help.

(1) It plans to establish neighborhood houses in all the rich centers, where those who can stand it can go and live just like the rich. It will thus enable a few of us to mingle with them, day by day, and gradually brighten their outlook and better their standards.

(2) It will send trained welfare workers to inspect the most desperate cases and gently reform one by one their conditions of living.

(3) It will instruct volunteers in the best methods of rich relief work, especially methods of relieving the rich of their wealth.

The most common type we treat is the man who is making great efforts to keep other people from getting his money away from him. Such a man is always in a nervous, excitable state. In fact our statistics show that many died from this strain. The typical case gets a temperature daily, from what he sees in the papers, about the attacks which radical persons are constantly making on property. Inflammation sets in, and his outbursts grow more noisy and violent. He practically

racks himself to pieces. It is a most painful end.

Other men try to invest money securely. This is a strain too. It leads to constant worries and losses, no matter what they invest in. Again, every man of means is exposed to innumerable skillful appeals to devote all he has to some new educational uses, or to lend it to friends in great need, or give aid to the sick. These appeals are so pressing that it wears out a man's strength to refuse them; and yet, since they are endless, he must. He can't give to them all. He must practice ways of dodging the determined askers who hunt him and trail him. Rich women, alone with their mail on a bright sunny morning, must learn to throw even the most pathetic circulars in the waste-paper-basket. In other words they must harden their hearts. But that hardens their arteries. It also gives them a disagreeable disposition; and that's quite a load.

It means much to the rich when our League takes these weights off their minds.

But the best way to give an idea of the good we are doing, will be to cite just a few special cases we have helped in the past:

CASE 102

Case 102 was a wealthy and ignorant girl who was found one cold morning exhibiting toy dogs

at a show. The dogs had been fed heartily, but the poor girl had had nothing to eat but raw carrots, which she had been told she must live on, to help her complexion. She had a hardened disposition, dull outlook, and deficient physique. Her home was like a furniture warehouse, especially her bedroom, a huge, over-decorated chamber, where she slept all alone. After a friendly study had been made of her case, her money was quietly taken away by degrees, this being accomplished with the aid of an old family lawyer, who was genuinely interested in helping his clients all he could in this way; and when this girl had thus reached a healthfully destitute state, a husband was found for her in the janitor of a Hoboken flat. This man is often kind to her when she does well in her work. She is not yet happy, but she is interested intensely in life. When we last saw this case, she was occupying a dark but cozy sub-basement, where she was sleeping three in a bed and had six children, though only four are now living with her, the others having run off; and her days were filled to the brim with wholesome toil.

CASE 176

Case 176 was an elderly clubman who had for many years terrorized his small family, his out-

breaks being attributed by him to the coffee. He said and believed that if his coffee were carefully made, he would be content. Investigation showed that it wasn't this but his money which was the root of the trouble. By nature a fighter, what he needed was plenty of personal conflicts, but his money had led to his living a sheltered life which gave him no scope. He had so much wealth that it took two nerve specialists over six months, in fact it took them nearly a year, before the amount of their bills had eaten up all his property. When this was done, however, employment was secured for the old gentleman on the police force, where his peculiar gift of ferocity could find more room for use. The coffee in the station-house, fortunately, was execrable, and this stirred him to a pitch which soon made him the ablest patrolman in his ward. He was then sent to clean up the three toughest districts in town, which he did with the utmost rigor in less than four days, completely overawing, single-handed, their turbulent gangs. At the police parade, recently, he was given a medal, the gift of a citizens' committee which admired his work. At the head of this committee, it may be added, was his former pastor, who had often reproached him in the old days for his profanity and violence. It is these very qualities that are now enabling him to do such good work, and thus winning him a warm place

in the community's heart. Meantime a letter of gratitude has been received by the League from his family, who have been removed to a quiet industrial farm in Connecticut, and whose thankfulness is touching for the peace that has come into their lives.

CASE 190

Case 190 was a baffling one in some ways. It was that of a dyspeptic society woman who spent her evenings at functions. She suffered greatly from colds, yet felt obliged to wear large, chilly collars of diamonds, and to sit in an open opera box unprotected from drafts. Although fretful and unhappy, she nevertheless objected most strongly to trying a life without money; so our district visitors had to devise other methods.

They began by removing several disease-breeding pets from the home. They then had the French chef deported, and taught the woman to live on a few simple dishes. These alleviatory arrangements resulted in some slight improvement. Like all half-way measures, however, they left her cure incomplete.

Then, almost by accident, a dealer in investment securities lost most of her fortune. The balance was taken by some cheery university presidents, who made her build infirmaries for them

in spite of rebuffs. Soon after she thus had been thrown on her own resources at last, a place was found for her to do ironing in a nice warm steam laundry, one of the high-grade ones where all the corrosives are put in by hand. The light exercise this work gives her has cured her dyspepsia. She now gets through at nine-thirty evenings, instead of sitting up till past midnight; and as she can wear a red-flannel undersuit, she has no more colds.

* * *

Other cases must be summarized instead of presented in detail. Anæmic young belles who used to be kept in ill-ventilated rooms every night, are sent for and taken to those open piers on the river, where they can dance with strong, manly grocers, or aldermen even, and where the river breezes soon bring back a glow to their cheeks. Gentlemen suffering from obesity have been carried to an old-fashioned woodyard to work, or, if entirely unskilled, they are given jobs helping plumbers. Hundreds of desperate children have been rescued from nurse girls, who were punishing them for romping and shouting, and shackling them in starched clothing. These children we try to turn loose on the lively East Side, where they can join in the vigorous games of the slums. Most rewarding of all, perhaps, are the young men of means who have been saved from lives of

indescribable folly, and who, through the simple abolition of inherited wealth, have been made into self-supporting, responsible citizens.

I cannot say more of the League's work in this brief report. But I must end by admitting that though we have done all we could, the hidden distress that still exists in rich homes is widespread. Families continue to engage in poisonous quarrels, idleness and chronic unemployment remain unabated, and discontent is gradually darkening the minds of its victims, depriving them of true mental vigor and even of sleep.

On the good side we have the fact that the nation appears to be roused. It is not roused very much, but it takes more interest than it once did, at least. To leave the rich to wrestle with their fortunes, alone and unaided, as was done in our grandfathers' times, seems unnatural in ours.

On the other hand, frankly, there is as yet no cure in sight. The difficulty is to devise legislation which will absorb excess wealth. At first sight this seems easy, and many new laws have been passed which the rich themselves have predicted would immediately reduce them to indigence. But somehow no law has yet done this. So we must just struggle on.

From Noah to Now

In the days of Father Noah life was sweet—life was sweet.
He played the soft majubal every day.
And for centuries and centuries he never crossed the street,
Much less supposed he'd ever move away.
But times grew bad and men grew bad, all up and down
the land,
And the soft majubal got all out of key;
And when the weather changed, besides, 'twas more than
he could stand.
So Father Noah he packed and put to sea.

And "Yo-ho-ho," with a mournful howl, said the poor
old boy to Ham;
And "Yo-ho-ho," sang Japhet, and a pink but tuneful
clam;
And "Yo-ho-ho," cried the sheep, and Shem, and a pair
of protozoa:
"We're a-going to roam till we find a home that will suit
old Father Noah."

There used to be rumors of a country that men called Atlantis. It was said to lie far out at sea. A magnificent country. The people there were happier and freer than anywhere else. It was also a land where it was no trouble at all to be rich, and where strangers were treated as equals

and welcomed as friends. Until it disappeared so mysteriously it was like an America, a land to which the people of those ancient times longed to go.

I dreamed once that it had not disappeared, after all, but that it was still to be found if you took a long voyage, and that it was happier and freer and finer than ever. And I wanted to go there. I dreamed that America had got itself in such trouble that thousands of people were leaving to live in Atlantis. This part of my dream was a nightmare, and not at all clear, but my recollection is that we'd elected Amy Lowell as President. And she said her understanding was that she'd been elected for life; and when any one disagreed with her, she sent a porter around to cut off his head. And decade after decade passed by, and she danced with the Senate, and made us sing to her at sunrise on the steps of the White House. And she wrote all the hymns. So we wanted to move to Atlantis.

But it wasn't at all easy to emigrate and give up America. In spite of the way that Amy beheaded us, we were fond of our country. And we knew if we went to another we mightn't come back. You can imagine how it would feel, perhaps, if you yourself were leaving America, and looking for the last time at all the little things in your room, and walking for the last time in the

streets or the fields you knew best. And the day before sailing you would go around seeing your



friends, and saying good-by to them, knowing you wouldn't see them again. And then on the last day you'd sit for a while with your mother, and she would talk of your plans and your comforts, and you'd both be quite calm. And the hour to go would come; and you'd kiss her. And she'd suddenly cling to you. . . .

Then the ship, and the steam-whistles calling, and the gray, endless sea. And you up on deck, day by day, staring out at the waters; and seeing not them but your loved ones, or bits of your home: wondering if you'd been courageous to leave it, or cold, and a fool.

But the sunsets and dawns, and the winds—strong and clean—would bring peace. You would think of the new world you were sailing to, and of how good it would be there, and of how you would prosper, and the long, happy life you would lead. . . . And the voyage would come to an end, and you'd sail up the harbor.

Then at the dock, men in strange clothing would shout orders at you; "Peely wush, okka Hoogs! Peely wush! Okkabab!" and you would discover that peely wush meant hurry up, and that



okka was a swear word and that when they said Hoog they meant you. It would be a comic nickname, you know: as we say Chinks for Chinamen. And they'd hustle you Hoogs off the ship, and shove you around on the pier, and examine your eyes and your pocket-books, and at last set you free.

And there you would be, in Atlantis, where people were happy.

But you'd find at the start that Atlantis was busy and rough; and parts of the city would be dirty and have a bad smell. And then you would find that the Hoogs mostly lived in those parts, and had to work at pretty nearly anything to pay for their lodging. You'd see Americans that you knew; Senator Smoot, perhaps, sewing shirts; and the Rev. Samuel Drury would be standing in the street peddling shoestrings. The reason for this would be that until they knew what okkabab meant, and could read and write the language of Atlantis, and spell its odd spellings, and pronounce it without too much of an American accent, they couldn't get any but unskilled and underpaid jobs. Meantime they would look to a native like cheap, outlandish peddlers. Even their own fellow-immigrants would try to exploit them. And instead of their finding it easy to get rich, as they'd hoped, they would be so hard up that they'd have to fight like wolves for each nickel.

Your American clothes would be another difficulty, because they'd be laughed at. You'd have to buy and learn to wear the kind of things they wore in Atlantis. And your most polite ways would seem rude in Atlantis, or silly; so you'd have to learn *their* rules of politeness, which would strike *you* as silly. And you'd have to learn habits of living which would often amaze you; and if you were slow to adopt them, they'd class you as queer. Their ideas of joking would also be different from yours; and you'd slowly and awkwardly discover what was fun in Atlantis.

You'd have to change yourself in so many ways, your old friends wouldn't know you. Pretty soon you wouldn't be an American at all any longer. And yet you would never feel wholly an Atlantisan either. Your children would look down on you as a greenhorn, and laugh at your slips. They would seem unsympathetic, or different,—not quite your own children.

The natives of Atlantis would help you along, once in a while, by giving you lectures and telling you not to read your home paper. But you, who had felt so adventurous and bold, when you started, would have to get used to their regarding you as a comic inferior. Not even your children would know what you had had to contend with. Not one of the natives would try to put himself in your place.

Yet how could they? How could any one who hadn't gone through the experience? It is a complicated matter to learn to belong to a strange country, when the process includes making yourself over to fit other men's notions.

It was easy for Noah: all he had to get used to was Ararat.

Sic Semper Dissenters

Written during the war-time censorship of our late Postmaster-General.

In the town of Hottentottenville an aged Hottentot,
Whose name was Hottentotten-tillypoo,
Was slowly hottentottering around a vacant lot,
With a vacant look upon his higaboo.
Now higaboo is Hottentot, as you may know, for face,
And to wear a vacant look upon your face is a disgrace.
But poor old Mr. Tillypoo, he had no other place—
Though I understand it grieved him through and thru.

He was grubbing up potatoes in an aimless sort of way,
Which really was the only way he had,
And an officer was watching him to see what he would say,
And arrest him if the things he said were bad.
For it seems this wretched Tillypoo had gone and had the thought
That his neighbors didn't always do exactly as they ought;
And as this was rank sedition, why, they hoped to see him caught,
For it naturally made them pretty mad.

So the men of Hottentottenville, they passed a little law,
Which they called the Hotta-Shotta-Shootum Act,
Which fixed it so the postman was a sort of Grand Bashaw,
Who determined what was false and what was fact.
And the postman sentenced Tillypoo, and wouldn't hear his wails,
But gave him twenty years apiece in all the local jails,
And said he couldn't vote no more, and barred him from the mails,
And expressed the hope that this would teach him tact.

Well, the last I heard of Tilly he was planning not to think,
And he'd tied a piece of string around his tongue,
And he never went within a mile of either pen or ink,
And he always stood when *any* song was sung.
And maybe you are thinking that his fate was rather tough,
But what I say is, not a bit, they didn't do enough.
When anybody differs with you, dammit, treat 'em rough,
Why, they ought to be bub-boiled alive and hung!

Humpty-Dumpty and Adam

It is not only every country that has its own language. It is each generation. The books and family letters of our grandfathers are not quite in our dialect. And so of the books of their grandfathers, and the letters they wrote. These dialects are not so different from ours that we can't make them out: they sound a little queer, that is all. Just as our own way of talking and writing (and thinking) will seem so quaint to our descendants that they'll put us away on the shelves.

A few books are written in a tongue that all times understand.

A few of us are linguists and have learned to enjoy the books of all ages.

For the rest, agèd books need translation into the speech of the day.

The poets of each generation seldom sing a new song. They turn to themes men always hav loved, and sing them in the mode of their times. Each new tribe of artists perpetually repaints the same pictures. The story-men tell the same stories. They remain fresh and young.

The disguise is new sometimes, but never the

story behind it. A few generations ago, when some one wrote Humpty-Dumpty, he was merely retelling an old story for the men of his era, one of the oldest of stories, the first part of Genesis.

It is a condensed account—it leaves out the serpent and Eve and the apple. Some editor blue-penciled these parts, perhaps, as fanciful little digressions. "Stick to the main theme," said the editor, "don't go wandering off into frills. Your story is about the fall of Adam. Get on. Make him fall."

"I had intended to introduce a love-interest," the author of Humpty-Dumpty explained.

"A love interest!" sneered the editor. "You should have waited to be born in the twentieth century. These are manlier times. Give us men and adventure and fate."

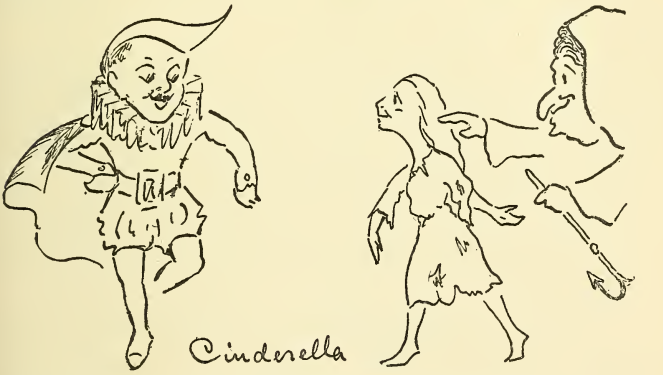
"And what about the garden," the author sighed. "Must that be cut too?"

"By all means. Change the garden. It's a pretty enough idea in romance. But a realist who has worked in one, knows that a garden's no paradise. Genesis got it just wrong. Adam should have been exiled from town as a punishment, and put to slave in a garden."

"But town isn't paradise either. We've got to start him in paradise."

"Dear me," said the editor. "There's only one place left to put the fellow, and that's on the wall. 'Adam sat on a wall.' Begin that way."

"I'm calling him Humpty-Dumpty," the author said. "It makes it less tragic. It suggests that



the fall didn't hurt Man so much after all."

"Which is true," said the editor.

I wish I had known that author. He had a kind heart. He has changed even the unforgiving cherubim in the Genesis story to those King's men who try in such a friendly way to restore Humpty-Dumpty. But the story can't let them. That would leave the hero back on his wall again—like some Greek philosopher. This other way, we think of him as starting out to conquer the world.

Humpty-Dumpty is a story for boys. Cinderella for girls. In Cinderella five able females, two old and three young, contend most resourcefully to capture one stupid young man. It is a terrible story. The beautiful surface barely masks

the hungry wiles underneath. But it's true. It depicts the exact situation a marrying girl has to face; and, even while she's a tot in the nursery, it reminds her to plan.

But these are examples of stories that live, and last for more than one age. The mortality is heavier in other fields. For instance, philosophy. Great philosophical works of past eras are still alive in a sense, but they dwell among us as foreigners do, while Mother Goose has been naturalized.

Modern philosophies are so different. Not many centuries ago, in those eras when few changes took place, men thought of the world as something to study, instead of to mold. It was something to appropriate and possess, to be sure, but not to transform.

Humpty-Dumpty sat on the wall, then. He hadn't begun his new life.

There were few inventors in those old times, and few of those few were honored. Edison among the Greeks would have been as lonely as Plato with us.

Civilization was Thought. It was measured by what men knew and felt of eternal things. It was wisdom.

Civilization to-day is invention: it is measured by our control over nature. If you remind a modern that nature is not wholly ductile, he is

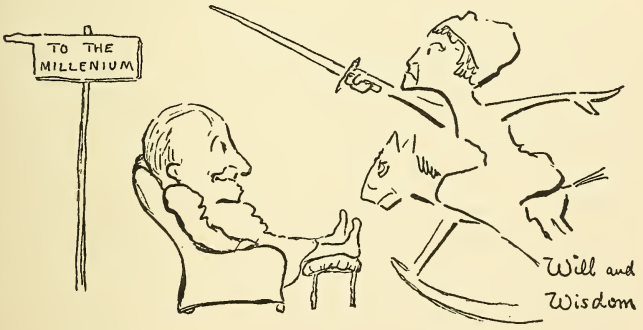
profoundly discouraged! "We *expect* to make over and control our world." We not only assume it is possible, we assume it is best.

What is democracy but a form of this impulse, says Professor George Plimpton Adams, "bidding man not to content himself with any political order thrust upon him, but actively to construct that order so that it does respond to his own nature"?

"Not contemplation . . . but creative activity," that is our modern attitude.

Well, it's all very interesting.

Will and Wisdom are both mighty leaders. Our times worship Will.



How It Looks to a Fish

The most ordinary steamship agent, talking to peasants in Europe, can describe America in such a way that those peasants will start there at once. But the most gifted preacher can't get men to hurry to heaven.

All sorts of prophets have dreamed of a heaven, and they have imagined all kinds; they have put houris in the Mahometan's paradise, and swords in Valhalla. But in spite of having carte blanche they have never invented a good one.

A man sits in his pew, hearing about harps and halos and hymns, and when it's all over he goes home and puts on his old wrapper. "I suppose I can stand it," he thinks. "I've stood corns and neuritis. But I just hate the idea of floating around any such region."



Some persons may want to go to heaven so as to keep out of hell, or to get away from misery here—if they are in great enough misery. Others think of it as a place to meet friends in, or as a

suitable destination for relatives. But the general idea is it's like being cast away in the tropics: the surroundings are gorgeous, and it's pleasant and warm—but not home.



It seems too bad that heaven should always be somehow repugnant, and unfit as it were for human habitation. Isn't there something we can do about it?

I fear there it not.

Assuming that we are immortal, what happens to a man when he dies? It is said by some that at first the surroundings in his new life seem shadowy, but after a bit they grow solid; and then it is the world left behind that seems vague. You lose touch with it and with those whom you knew there—except when they think of you. When they think of you, although you can see them, and feel what they're thinking, it isn't like hearing the words that they say, or their voices; it's not like looking over their shoulders to see what they write; it's more like sensing what is in their thoughts.

But at first you are too bewildered to do this.

You are in a new world, and you find yourself surrounded by spirits, telling you that you're dead. The spiritualists say that many new arrivals refuse to believe they are dead, and look around skeptically at heaven, and think they are dreaming. It often takes a long time to convince them. This must be rather awkward. It's as though no one who arrived in Chicago would believe he was there, but went stumbling around, treating citizens as though they weren't real, and saying that he doubted whether there was any such place as Chicago.

But if there is any truth in this picture, it explains a great deal. If the spirits themselves cannot clearly take in their new life at first, how can we on this side of the barrier ever understand what it's like? And, not understanding, what wonder we don't find it attractive?

You can't describe one kind of existence to those in another.

Suppose, for example, we were describing dry land to a fish.

"We have steam-heat and sun-sets," I might tell him—just for a beginning.

And the fish would think: "Heat? Phew! that's murderous! And oh, that sizzling old sun!"

"We have legs," I might add.

"What are legs?"

"Things to walk on. They're like sticks, that grow right on our bodies. We do not use fins."

"What, no fins! Why, with fins, just a flicker will shoot me in any direction. Legs are clumsy and slow: think of tottering around on such stumps! And you can only go on the level with them; you can't rise and dip."

"Yes, we can. We build stairs."

"But how primitive!"

Perhaps he would ask me what drawbacks there were to earthly existence; and how he would moan when I told him about bills and battles.

"And is it true," he might say, "that there really are beings called dentists? Weird creatures, who pull your poor teeth out, and hammer your mouths? Bless my gills! it sounds dreadful! Don't ask me to leave my nice ocean!"

Then, to be fair, he might ask, "What's the other side of the picture, old man? What pleasures have you that would tempt me? What do you do to amuse yourselves?" And I would tell him about Charlie Chaplin, and Geraldine Farrar, and business, and poetry—but how could I describe Charlie Chaplin from the fish point of view? And poetry?—getting ecstasy from little black dots on a page? "You get soulful over *that* kind of doings?" he would ask, with a smile. "Well, all right, but it sounds pretty crazy to a sensible fish."

"Business is the main thing here, anyhow," I'd answer.

"And what's 'business'?"

"Well, it's—er—it's like this: Suppose you, for instance, were to go and catch a great many flies—"



The fish would look pleased and smile dreamily.

"But then not eat them, mind you."

"Not *eat* them?"

"No, but put them all out on a bit of flat rock, for a counter, and 'sell' them to other fish: exchange them, I mean—for shells, let us say, if you used shells as money."

The fish would look puzzled. "But what *for*, my dear sir?" he'd inquire. "What would I do with shells?"

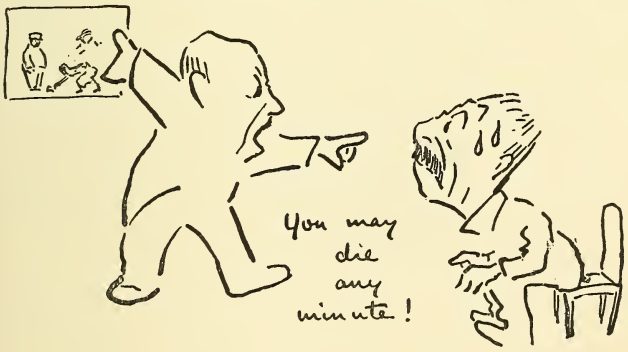


"Exchange them for flies again, see?"

"O my soul! what a life!"

A Hopeful Old Bigamist

There are any number of difficulties and bumps along the roads of this world, and yet there are plenty of easy-going people who never prepare for



them. They take all such things as they come. Some are buoyant, some fearless.

But within the last hundred years, large companies have been organized to go after these people, and catch them alone somewhere and give them a good thorough fright. These companies hire men who are experts at that sort of thing; men who make it their life-work to find fearless persons and scare them.

But no matter how ambitious and active these experts may be, they cannot catch every one

personally. It would take too much time. So they write gloomy advertisements which are designed to scare people in general.

These advertisements are a characteristic feature of our civilization.

Man goes down-town, whistling, sunny morning. Happens to pick up a magazine. Immediately he gets hit in the eye with a harrowing picture. Sometimes it is one that reminds him he may die any minute, and depicts his widow and children limping around in the streets, hunting crusts. Or it may be a picture of his house burning up, or his motor upsetting. Or an illness, and there he is lying flat and weak on his bed.

* * *



After he has seen a good many of such pictures, he grows quiet. Stops whistling. He learns how

to worry, and he worries off and on till it hurts. Then, to get some relief, he makes a contract with one of those companies, which provides him with what we call insurance, for an annual tribute.

I hope no one will think I am disparaging insurance, which is a useful arrangement. It enables many of us to pool our risks and be protected from hardship. And the best companies nowadays handle the thing very well. They scare a person as little as possible. They just gently depress him. They inflict just enough mental torture to get him to put in his money. It is only when he is stubborn about it that they give him the cold chills.

Every century has some such institution. The Inquisition was worse.

Like insurance, it had high ideals, but peculiar methods.

Insurance men, however, are steadily improving their methods. Instead of always reminding you how awful it is not to insure, they sometimes print brighter pictures, which show how happy you will feel if you do. For instance, a picture of a postman bringing a check to your widow. Your widow is thanking the postman, her face full of joy. Sometimes the old president of the company is shown in the upper left corner, writing out the check personally, as soon as he hears of your death. Or maybe they leave out the president

and put in your infant son, for good measure. He is playing in his innocent way with his dead father's cane, and the widow, with a speculative eye on him, is thoughtfully murmuring, "As soon as he is old enough I must insure my little boy too."

* * *

In the days before it was possible to insure, there was even more gloom. Light-hearted people may have worried less, but the rest worried more. They could save enough money for the future if it was sufficiently distant, but not for a serious disaster that might come too soon. This darkened their outlook. They had no one to trust in but God.

There has always been a great deal of talk about trusting in God, but human beings incline to be moderate and cautious in trying it. As a rule no one does it unless he has to.

Not even the clergymen.

A few years ago a fund was formed, in the Episcopal Church, to pay agèd ministers pensions, so they would never be destitute. This brought the greatest happiness to many of them who were approaching decrepitude. Letters came in from ministers who had worried in silence for years, with no one to trust but the Deity, whose plans might be strange. They described how they had wept with relief, when this fund was established. Printed copies of these letters were mailed to all

the good Christians who had contributed, to show them how much true joy and happiness their money had brought, and how thankful the clergy were to have something solid to trust, like a pension.

When a pastor with a pension is in the pulpit, looking around at his flock, suppose he sees that some of them are needy and have no pensions coming? If imaginative enough, he will sympathize with their poor fearful hearts, and advise them as wisely as possible. But there's not much to say. The only course for such folk is to try to trust God, who is mighty, and meantime be frugal and save every cent that they can.

Some day, he prays, we all shall have pensions.

* * *

And suppose a man isn't religious, what had he better trust? His money, or his own native mettle?

I should like to trust both.

But they tell me that that is impracticable. Won't work at all. I can *have* some of both, of course. Certainly. But I cannot *trust* both.

Like all other men I have my own inner fountain of strength, and it's been a faithful old thing; it has done a lot for me. It has vigor in it yet—but it isn't big and fiery, or strong. I could only have made it work abundantly if I had relied wholly on it. If I had done that, it would have

probably called out my full powers. But instead I have relied partly on money, for fear my strength might desert me; and that fear has naturally had an effect on my strength. I work hard, but with less fire. Less eagerness. Progressively less. Any man who doesn't trust his spirit will find it will ebb.

And the same's true of money. Unless you are in love with your wealth, it will slip through your fingers. If you want to get a whole lot of money, worship gold all your days.

This isn't a sure recipe, I must add, to get a whole lot of money. I should be sorry to have my readers spring out of their chairs at these words, and rush happily off to make money their god, so as to be millionaires. It doesn't work so quickly or surely as that, I admit. But this much is true, anyhow: if you do not care enough about money you will hardly grow rich. You must be pretty devoted to win a jealous mistress like gold.

They are both jealous mistresses, that's the worst of it.

It is an awkward predicament.

* * *

I don't like to face this problem squarely. I don't get it settled. I keep on, like a hopeful old bigamist, in love with both mistresses: my money and my spirit or mettle.

I try to soothe each. I say to my mettle, "I

care much more for you than for money: it's true that I keep money, too; but it's you that I love. You and I are one, aren't we? Very well, then. Come on. Let's be happy."

And I say to my money, "Now be faithful: for God's sake be faithful: don't slip off and desert me and leave me alone in the world." She looks jealously at me. "Alone?" she says; "how about that mettle of yours, you're so fond of?" "Ah, my dear," I say sadly, giving her an affectionate squeeze, "my mettle is no better than she should be. I don't like to talk of it. You are the one that I expect to comfort me in my dark moments; and I hope you and I will be here together long after my mettle has gone."

There you have my ménage. It's been difficult. But I cannot complain. As a bigamist I suppose on the whole I've been fairly successful. Yet I know I'd have more money to-day—I think a great deal more money—if I had been more faithful to Mammon, as they call the poor creature. And similarly I might have led an heroic, ardent life with my mettle, if I had ever trusted it fully.

That's the trouble with bigamy.

The Revolt of Capital

Once upon a time all the large corporations were controlled by labor. The whole system was exactly the opposite of what it is now. It was labor that elected the directors, and the officers too. Capital had no representatives at all in the management.

It was a curious period. Think of capital having no say, even about its own rates! When a concern like the United Great Steel Co., was in need of more capital, the labor man who was at the head of it, President Albert H. Hairy, went out and hired what he wanted on the best terms he could. Sometimes these terms seemed cruelly low to the capitalists, but whenever one of them grumbled he was paid off at once, and his place was soon taken by another who wasn't so uppish. This made for discipline and improved the service.

Under this régime—as under most others—there was often mismanagement. Those in control paid themselves too well—as those in control sometimes do. Failures and reorganizations resulted from this, which reduced the usual return to the workers and made them feel gloomy; but as these depressions threw capitalists out of em-

ployment, and thus made capital cheaper, they had their bright side.

The capitalists, however, grumbled more and more. Even when they were well paid and well treated they grumbled. No matter how much they got, they felt they weren't getting their dues. They knew that labor elected the management; and they knew human nature. Putting these two premises together, they drew the conclusion that labor was probably getting more than its share, and capital less. President Hairy, of the Steel Co., explained to them this couldn't be true, because the market for capital was a free and open market. He quoted a great many economic laws that proved it, and all the professors of economy said he was right. But the capitalists wouldn't believe in these laws, because they weren't on their side, nor would they read any of the volumes the professors composed. They would read only a book that an old German capitalist wrote—a radical book which turned economics all upside-down and said that capital ought to start a class war and govern the world.

Discontent breeds agitation. Agitation breeds professional agitators. A few unruly loud-voiced capitalists climbed up on soap-boxes and began to harangue their quiet comrades, just to stir up needless trouble. When arrested, they invoked (as they put it) the right of free speech. The labor

men replied by invoking things like law and order. Everybody became morally indignant at something. The press invoked the Fathers of the Republic, Magna Charta, and Justice. Excited and bewildered by this crossfire, the police one evening raided a Fifth avenue club, where a capitalist named M. R. Goldman was talking in an incendiary way to his friends. "All honest law-abiding capitalists will applaud this raid," said the papers. But they didn't. They began to feel persecuted. And presently some capitalists formed what they called a union.

It was only a small union, that first one, but it had courage. One afternoon President Hairy looked up from his desk to find four stout, red-faced capitalists pushing each other nervously into his office. He asked them their business. They huskily demanded that every capitalist on that company's books be paid at least a half per cent more for his money. The president refused to treat with them except as individuals. They then called a strike.

The results of this first strike were profoundly discouraging. The leaders were tried for conspiracy, those who walked out at their call were blacklisted, and the victorious labor men soon secured other capitalists in plenty, a private carload being brought over from Philadelphia at night. The labor leaders became so domineering

in their triumph they refused to engage capitalists who drank or who talked of their wrongs. They began importing cheap foreign capital to supply all new needs. But these measures of oppression only increased the class feeling of capitalists and taught them to stand shoulder to shoulder in the fight for their rights.

The years of warfare that followed were as obstinate as any in history. Little by little, in spite of the labor men's sneers, the enormous power of capital made itself felt. An army of unemployed capitalists marched upon Washington. The Brotherhood of Railway Bondholders, being indicted for not buying enough new bonds to move the mails, locked up every dollar they possessed and defied the Government. The Industrial Shareholders of the World, a still more rabid body, insisted on having an eight per cent law for their money. All great cities were the scenes of wild capitalist riots. Formerly indifferent citizens were alarmed and angered by seeing their quiet streets turned into Bedlam at night, with reckless old capitalists roaring through them in taxis, singing Yankee Boodle or shouting "Down with labor!" For that finally became the cry: labor must go. They still meant to use labor, somehow, they confusedly admitted, but capital and not labor must have absolute control of all industries.

As the irrepressible conflict forced its way into politics, Congress made statesmanlike efforts to settle the problem. After earnest and thoughtful debate they enacted a measure which made the first Monday in September a holiday, called Capital Day. As this hoped-for cure did not accomplish much they attempted another, by adding a Secretary of Capital to the President's cabinet. Conservative people were horrified. But Congress was pushed even further. It was persuaded to prohibit employing the capital of women and children, and it ordered all Japanese capital out of the country. On one point, however, Congress was obstinate and would not budge an inch. They wouldn't give capital full control of the railroads and mills.

The capitalists themselves were obliged to realize, gradually, that this could be at best but a beautiful dream. It seemed there was one great argument against it: labor men were a unit in believing the scheme wouldn't work. How could scattered investors, who had not worked at an industry, elect—with any intelligence—the managers of it? Even liberal labor men said that the idea was preposterous.

At this moment a citizen of East Braintree, Mass., stepped forward, and advocated a compromise. He said in effect:

"The cause of our present industrial turmoil is this: The rulers that govern our industries are not rightly elected. Our boards of directors may be called our industrial legislatures; they manage a most important part of our national life; but they are chosen by only one group of persons. No others can vote. If Congress were elected by a class, as our boards of directors are, this country would be constantly in a state of revolution politically, just as it is now industrially." That was his argument.

"Both those who do the work and those who put in the money should rightfully be represented in these governing bodies." That was his cure. If corporations would adopt this democratic organization, he said, two-sided discussions would take place at their meetings. "These discussions would tend to prevent the adoption of policies that now create endless antagonism between labor and capital." And he went on to point out the many other natural advantages.

This compromise was tried. At first it naturally made labor angry, labor having been in exclusive control for so long. Many laborers declined to have anything to do with concerns that were run by "low ignorant speculators," as they called them, "men who knew nothing of any concern's real needs." Ultimately, however, they yielded to the trend of the times.

Democratic instead of autocratic control brought about team-play. Men learned to work together for their common good.

Of course capitalists and laborers did not get on any too well together. Self-respecting men on each side hated the other side's ways—even their ways of dressing and talking, and amusing themselves. The workers talked of the dignity of labor and called capital selfish. On the other hand, ardent young capitalists who loved lofty ideals, complained that the dignity of capital was not respected by labor. These young men despised all non-capitalists on high moral grounds. They argued that every such man who went through life without laying aside any wealth for those to come, must be selfish by nature and utterly unsocial at heart. There always are plenty of high moral grounds for both sides.

But this mere surface friction was hardly heard of, except in the pages of the radical capitalist press. There were no more strikes,—that was the main thing. The public was happy.

At least, they were happy until the next problem came along to be solved.

Still Reading Away?



Still reading away at your paper?
Still sitting at editors' feet?
(Clay feet!)
Oh, why do you muse on their views of the news,
When breezes are sweet in the street?
There's a bit of cloud flying by in the sky.
Tomorrow 'twill be far away.
There's a slip of a girl, see her dance to my song!
Tomorrow she'll be old and gray.
Come along!
There's music and sunshine and life in the street,
But ah, you must take them today.

Portraits

A Wild Polish Hero and the Reverend Lyman Abbott

The books a man likes best are those with somebody in them like him. I don't say it isn't a pleasure to read about others, but if he too is there it's still better. And when he is the hero—ah! It's like living a whole extra life.

But there is no drawing back, once you put yourself into some character—you must do all



that he does, no matter how you hate his mistakes. I remember once identifying myself with a dissolute Pole, in a novel, who led me a dance that I haven't forgotten yet. I ought never to have let myself fancy that I was that fellow. He was moody, excitable, he drank more brandy than I was prepared to; he talked most bombastically. He made the most pitiful jokes. But what took my eye in him was this: he was sincere with himself. He was only twenty-five years of age, but though young, he was honest. When he was in love with two women he never dodged facing it squarely. He deceived the two women, I grant you, but most heroes deceive themselves, too. They tell themselves some pretty story in dilemmas like that. This Pole always saw through *his* stories. He questioned his heart, and listened with reasonable honesty to its responses.



He deceived the two women

Our capacity for analyzing and criticizing our natures is wonderful. When a man is without self-awareness, I feel toward him as I do toward animals.

I admire the animals. I am glad I am not one myself—life in the



wilds must be awful—but animals are healthy and sound; and some are good, and intelligent. Men who can't analyze themselves may be good and intelligent also. But they are not advanced beings.

The test of a civilized person is first self-awareness, and then depth after depth of sincerity in self-confrontation. "Unhealthy?" Why, certain-

ly! "Risky?" Yes; like all exploring. But unless you are capable of this kind of thinking, what are you? No matter how able or great, you are still with the animals.

Here and there is a person who achieves this in ways of his own. Not through brain-work alone, or most surely, can insight be won. A few have by nature a true yet instinctive self-knowledge. But that takes a pure soul. The tricks of self-deceiving are too many and ingenious for most of us. . . .

Speaking of pure souls reminds me of the editor of the Outlook, good old Lyman Abbott, although his is unfortunately the kind that is tastelessly pure. He's as wholesome and good as oatmeal is, but the salt was left out. An excellent person but wingless; not stupid, but dull. Yet —there's something about him—he has an attractive integrity. He puts on no airs. He is simple, unpretentious, and he's so straightforward he makes me respect him.

Many people respect Lyman Abbott. Yet I was surprised to. Well, I had the Rollo books given to me, as a child; I had to read them on Sundays; and the author of those awful volumes was Lyman Abbott's father. He wrote books for the young. People who write books for the young are a tribe by themselves, and little did I suppose I should ever live to respect one.

A Wild Polish Hero

Rollo was a Sunday-school boy. Lyman Abbott's a Sunday-school man. He combines in himself the excellencies and the colorlessness of the Sunday-school atmosphere. When it comes time to group us as sheep or as goats, I know this, there won't be any question that he is a regular sheep. No capers for him, except the most innocent capers. No tossing of that excellent head, no kicking up of his heels. There isn't the faintest suspicion of goatiness in him.

Yet it's strange he's so hopeless: he likes certain forms of adventure. He was a bill-collector once. And when Kansas was being settled so bloodily, in our slavery days, he felt wishful to go there. He once did some detective work too, and he greatly enjoyed it. But his tastes are all heavily flavored with moral intentions.

"My recreations," he says in his book, "I took rather seriously. I neither danced nor played cards, and after I joined the church very rarely went to the theater." He liked music, liked playing the organ. He implies that he played it however to add to his income. He was a lawyer when he first felt a call in his heart to the ministry. "Had my wife objected to the change I should have remained in the law." He has taken ale or porter at times, "under doctor's counsel," but in general he has been an "abstainer." ("From both fermented and distilled liquors," he adds.)

He never has shaved, never smoked. On the other hand, he says, "I had no inclination to be a monk"; when not at work in the evening, "I was likely to be out, perhaps at a concert or a religious or political meeting, perhaps on a social call." His father kept a boarding school for girls, and that was where Lyman made most of his social calls, as a youth.

He never overdoes anything. "It is a wise hygienic rule to spend less strength than one can accumulate." (That seems like the perfect recipe for not being a genius.) A professional hypnotist once told him he was not a good subject. "I never have been," he writes: "I have passed through some exciting experiences . . . but I have never been swept off my feet. I have never lost my consciousness of self or my self-mastery. I wonder why it is. I am not conscious of being either especially strong-willed or especially self-possessed."

He reads with assiduity, he says, but without avidity. He seems to live that way, too.

His sermons, his book tells us, have had merit, but have always lacked magnetism. (You can't sweep other people off their feet, if you can't be swept off your own.) He likes preaching, however. It comes easily to him.

We are all of us so busy with the small bits of life we can envisage, that we don't often think of how much we all fail to take in. Lyman Abbott

has been kept busy being a purifying influence. Certain other phases of life, accordingly, simply do not exist for him. If romance tried approaching the Reverend Lyman Abbott, at night, it would stand no more chance than a rose would against disinfectants.

Suppose that a Board of Eugenics were in charge of this nation, what would they do with the species this man represents? They would see his good qualities—industry, poise, generosity. It would be too bad to exterminate Dr. Abbott; it is plain we need some of him. "But," they would reflect, "this species is apt to wax numerous. We must remember Australia and the rabbits. This type might overrun the whole country. We might even have to put up barbed-wire, or shoot the excess, for us to stay human."

My own recommendation is to cross a few specimens with Poles.



The Crow's Nest

Lyman Abbott, calm and dry,
With your conscientious eye,
Can it possibly be true
He who made the Poles made you?

In the forest, on the beach,
You have pondered what to preach.
Magic nights of piercing beauty,
You have lectured us on duty.

In your admirable heart
Lives a Yearning to Impart;
In your veins an earnest flood
Of listerine instead of blood.

Lyman, Lyman, do you think
If you gambled, took to drink,
Loved a Countess, lost your soul,
You could *ever* be a Pole?

Mrs. P's Side of It

So Prometheus, the Titan, seeing the great need that man had of fire, risked all and set out for Olympus, and brought thence the flame.

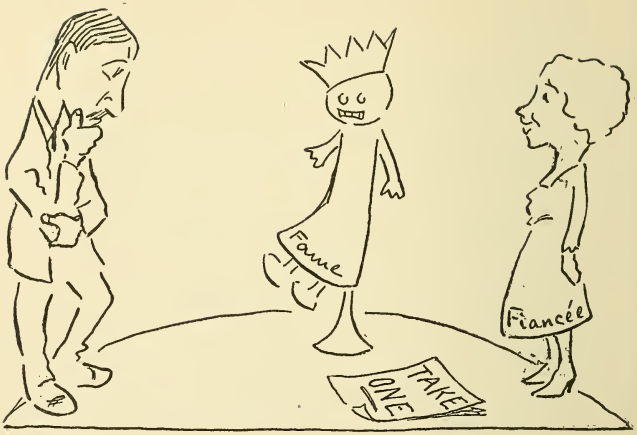
And warmth, comfort, art and inventions spread over the world.

But as to Prometheus, he was seized by the gods, in their wrath, and chained to a rock in the Scythian wilds, by the sea. There no ear heard his cries. There he raged on alone, year by year, with his eyelids cut off, while cold-hearted vultures with great beaks like horns tore his flesh.

It is an interesting thing that Prometheus, who is a hero to us, should have been regarded so differently by his contemporaries. Some thought of him as merely a sort of social settlement-worker, living among men to improve them, in a sleek, earnest spirit. Some thought him a common adventurer. Others a radical.

As a matter of fact, he was really very much like the rest of us.

The records seem to indicate he was a well-to-do prominent citizen, who was active in getting the world of his day straightened out. I imagine him going around town, in the real-estate business, a



substantial, respected man, planning highways and harbor facilities. Then he gets this idea, about bringing down fire from heaven. At first he dismisses it. But he thinks about the advantages of fire, and begins to believe he could get it. He starts talking to others about it. Every one laughs. It is a little too absurd, you know—this talk about fire from heaven! His fellow businessmen call him a visionary. He of course resents that. He defends his plan, and tries to explain why it's perfectly practicable, but he does it so warmly they begin to lose some of their trust in him. The word goes around not to elect him to the Chamber of Commerce. The solid men of the community begin to avoid him. A famous

university silently changes its plans, and decides not to give Mr. Prometheus that LL.D. degree. And finally one of his friends pays him a call, after dark, and bluntly and worriedly warns him he's queering himself.

Prometheus goes upstairs, indignant, to talk to his wife. He doesn't tell her anything about his friend, or the community's criticisms, but he describes all over again what a boon fire would be to mankind. After an hour of this he has reassured himself, and forgotten his friend. His eyes shine. He looks almost handsome. His wife is quite thrilled. She says he is wonderful, and no one ever had such a husband.

But she says it sounds awfully dangerous.

"Well," he owns, "there's *some* risk, but we ought to look at it impersonally."

She says: "Looking at it quite impersonally, I think you had better not do it."

"What?" he shouts; "don't you realize what a tremendous help fire would—"

"Oh *yes,* dear," she says: "the plan's *perfect.* But *you* shouldn't go. You have such important work to attend to, here at home, without that. Some younger, less valuable person—"

"Ah, my dear," Prometheus laughs, "you're like every one else. You want to see the world helped, and wars won, whatever the cost; but you

don't want either me or you to pay any part of the price. You think all dangerous work should be done by some other woman's husband."

Mrs. Prometheus purses her lips and her face becomes obstinate. "I don't think *any* married man has a right to take such risks," she observes.

"Well, you ought to hear what the single men say about that," he retorts. "It's pretty thick to expect *them* to die, they say, for other men's wives."

Mrs. Prometheus shrugs at the shallowness of those silly bachelors, and doesn't bother even to comment on their point of view. Instead, she says tactfully that she sees Prometheus has set his heart upon going, and she wants him to feel perfectly free to do just what he likes. Only there are certain practical matters that one must consider. There's the mortgage, and the laundress —unless he'd like to have her do the washing herself, which she'd be glad to do only he never took those stones out of her way, in the brook— and there's the bill for that last set of bear-skins that she got for the windows; and she doesn't see exactly how she can keep the home up by herself, if he is to wander around neglecting his real-estate business.

He says he won't be chained by his business.

She reminds him that she has already explained

he's perfectly free. But she just wants to know how he wishes her to arrange in his absence.

"Very well, then," he blazes out, "I will give up my plan: let it go! let men go to the devil! I'm a prisoner, that's what it comes to. Like all married men. There isn't a damn one of us that's

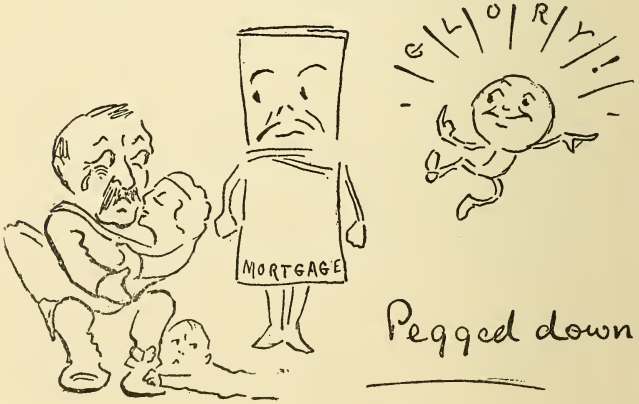


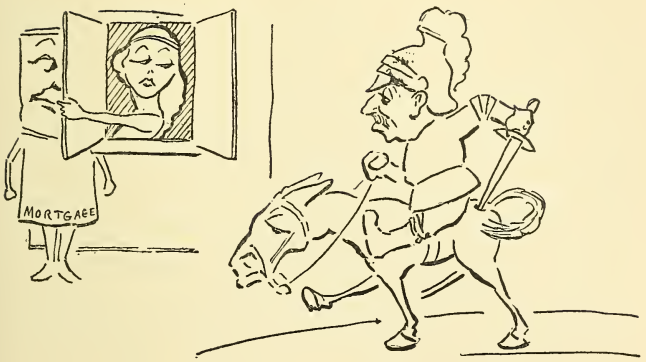
allowed to do what the world needs, or anything fine and unselfish."

She says that's unjust. She'd *love* to have him be a great hero, and she always has said so, but she doesn't see why he can't be one without leaving his wife.

Prometheus, with a groan at his bondage, walks out of the house, leaving her feeling injured and

wondering at the hardness of men. And he stamps up and down the yard, working himself up into a state, and filling his mind with dark pictures. Must every married man sit at home with his wife in his arms, yearning for roving and achievement, but yearning in vain? Pegged down, with a baby as a peg, and a mortgage as jailer. Must every young fellow choose between a fiancée and adventure? Even when he does choose adventure, they won't let him alone. There will always be some girl at a window as he passes by, who will tempt him to stop and play dolls with with her, and stay indoors for keeps, and wrestle with a mortgage for exercise, and give up the road. Prometheus swears. He tries to imagine what our epics would





be like if wives wrote them: what heroes they'd sing. Tidy, amiable, hearthstone heroes, who'd always wind up the clock regularly, and never invent dangerous airplanes or seek the North Pole. Ulysses knitting sweaters by the fireside. George Washington feeding canaries. . . .

Mrs. Prometheus sticks her head out of the window: "I'll say just one word. I had supposed we were partners, who had gone into the home-making business."

He says what good are homes if they emasculate spirited men.

She says what good are spirited men if they make the world homeless.

"*I* don't intend to make the world homeless."

"No, only your wife."

Well, Prometheus gives in, of course, and aban-

dons his plan, as millions of others have done, after talks with their wives. But ah, there is another great force besides wives in the world.

It happened, as you know, that Prometheus didn't get on well with Zeus. They had different ideas as to how the world should he arranged. Prometheus had more experience, but Zeus had the power. Rivalry, combined with dislike,—that is the great force I speak of. Zeus didn't wish men to have fire. That was enough for Prometheus. He told himself how incompetent Zeus was to manage the world, how selfish he was, how indifferent to men's need of fire. And that was what braced him, at last, to escape from his wife, and bring down an ember from heaven, and bestow it upon men.

"General Rejoicing on Earth," said the newspapers, when the deed had been done. To get anything from heaven seemed as remarkable then as it would now. Prometheus having accomplished something was immediately ranked as a hero. The Chamber of Commerce still privately thought he had been rather wild, but after a debate on the subject they gave him a dinner. He was also presented with a loving cup and the keys of the city. (He had no use for either, but those primitive men thought them honors.) And after the public reception Prometheus went home, and had another reception behind closed doors

from Mrs. Prometheus, who had had to sell preserves and take in sewing while he was away.

Meanwhile everybody was using this newfangled thing, fire, except old folks who were set in their ways and who said it was dangerous. And presently men found it *was* dangerous. It wasn't just a question of scorched fingers—it burned out two caves. It roasted the toes of a lady who went to sleep while cooking sliced elephant. And although Prometheus had warned them and warned them about being careless, and had shown them exactly how to use it, he was blamed for each burn.

Some citizens were sarcastic and wrote him elaborate letters, thanking him so much for the suffering he had caused them and wishing him lots of the same. Some were reasonable and patient, but said he ought to have perfected this thing, before exposing the lives of the community to a bungling device. Others were seriously angry. They wished him imprisoned. Why should a man who had caused so much damage walk about, free? They inquired where justice was, at that rate; and held a mass-meeting.

It was owing to this that the gods discovered what he had done. A volley of terrible thunderclaps at once shook the skies, and Zeus had Prometheus arrested. He was led off to Scythia—the Siberia of those times—without trial, and the

police left him chained to a rock there, and hurried back home. And everybody sympathized greatly with Mrs. Prometheus, for having a husband who had wilfully disgraced his poor wife. And they tried to be nice to her, but of course she was under a cloud, and had to take in more sewing than ever, and was never asked out. And a year or two later some books were written, psychoanalyzing Prometheus; and a professor who had made a study of the economic interpretation of heroes wrote an interesting paper discussing his probable motives, pointing out that he must have had relatives who wished to sell fire-insurance.

So his great deed ended in confusion. Like other great deeds. All he got was a tumult of mixed praise and blame from the crowd; and in his dark moments he must have felt completely discouraged, and wished that he'd just lived along in comfort and minded his business.

His friend, who had warned him originally, thought of him at times. He used to sit at home and feel glad that for his part he'd kept out of it. Then he would stir up the fire in his grate and comfortably get into bed, and forget about Prometheus, facing the winds and the vulture.

The Death of Logan

Cockroaches, like the Wise Men, originally lived in the East. They were at first far from hardy—wretched travelers, hating changes of climate. But when England began trading with the Orient, the cockroach grew venturesome, and began putting to sea as a stowaway. It was thus he reached England.

He settled down at first in her seaports. Remained there for years. People inland heard of him, or saw him if they went to the coast, but supposed themselves immune from his visits. Now he owns the whole island. And wherever the Englishman has journeyed, or settled, or trafficked, except perhaps on the ice-floes of Labrador, we now find the cockroach.

We all know his habits. He prefers to live in kitchens and bakeries. Eats all kinds of food. Eats shoes and the bindings of books. Also eats his own relatives. Any relative that isn't good and lively is at once eaten up.

You can tell the sexes apart (if you want to) by this: The males don't drag their stomachs on the ground the way the females do, and they have better wings. Their wings are not good

enough to use much, but still, they have little ones.

The most surprising thing about roaches is that they live several years. Scientists say maybe five. Owing to this they get to know all of a family's ways, and can't be caught napping; they have plenty of time to study roach powders and learn to digest them. They dislike castor oil, though, and keep away from where it has been rubbed.

Cockroaches are intelligent beings. Their natures are human. They are not like other insects, any more than dogs are like other animals. I wish some man of science and sympathy would interpret their lives.

That book that I dream of on roaches: will it ever be written? Brown Beauty, or Only a Cockroach, by Mary Gook Twillee—a book that little children would read with wet eyes Sunday evenings. No, that sounds like a pamphlet from the Society for the Prevention of Stepping on Cockroaches. We want nothing humanitarian. Still less, a Work on the subject. We want a poet to do for the cockroach what Maeterlinck has done for the Bee.

If nobody else will, I shall probably have to do it myself.

* * *

Since boyhood (I shall begin) I have felt the injustice of men to the roach. Or not men, no; but women. Men are in this matter more toler-

ant, more live-and-let-live in their ways. But women have condemned the roach not only unheard, but unjudged. Not one of them has ever tried petting a roach to gain his affection. Not one of them has studied him or encouraged him to show his good side. Some cockroaches, for instance, are exceedingly playful and gay, but what chance have they to show this, when being stepped on, or chased with a broom? Suppose we had treated dogs this way; scared them; made fugitives of them!

No, the human race, though kind to its favorites, is cruel to others. The pale little, lovable cockroach has been given no show. If a housewife would call to her roaches as she does to her hens, "Here chick-chick, here cock-cock, here roaches," how they would come scampering! They would eat from her hand and lay eggs for her—they do now, in fact.

"But the eggs are not legible—I mean edible," an excited reader objects. How do you know, my poor prejudiced reader? Have you ever tried them? And suppose they are not. Is that the fault of the cockroach or God?

We should learn that blind enmity is not the attitude to take toward strangers. The cockroach has journeyed from Asia to come to our shores; and because he looked queer, like most Asiatics, he has been condemned from the start. The

charges are that he is dirty and that he eats the food we leave lying around. Well, well, well! Eats our food, does he? Is that a crime? Do not birds do the same? And as to his being dirty, have you ever kept dogs in your home? One dog will bring in more dust and mud and loose hairs in a day, than a colony, an empire, of cockroaches will in a year.

It is easy enough to drive cockroaches away if you wish. Not with powder or poison: this only arouses their obstinacy. The right way is to import other insects that prey upon roaches. The hawk-ticks exterminate them as readily as wimples do moles. The only thing to remember is that then you have the hawk-ticks on hand, and they float around the ceiling, and pounce down, and hide in your ears.

You may be sure that *some* insects will live with you. It's only a question which kind.

I remember Mr. Burbank once denied this when we talked of the matter. Alluding to the fact that the cockroach likes to eat other roaches, he said why not breed a roach that wouldn't eat anything else? When one introduced these into the home they would first eat the old timers, and then quietly devour each other until all were gone.

But how could a home remain bare of insects? Nature abhors such a vacuum. Some men would like to cover the whole world with porcelain tiles,

and make old Mother Earth, as we know her, disappear from our view. They would sterilize and scrub the whole planet, so as to make the place sanitary. Well, I too feel that way at times: we all have finicky moments. But in my robust hours I sympathize with Nature. A hygienic kitchen is unnatural. It should be swarming with life. (The way mine is.)

I see a great deal of the roach when I visit my kitchen. His habits, to be sure, are nocturnal. But, then, so are mine. However, with a little arranging, it is simple to prevent awkward clashes. I do not like cockroaches on my table at supper, for instance. Very well, I merely get me a table with carved spiral legs. The roach cannot climb up such legs. To hump himself over them bruises him, and injures his stomach. And if he tries to follow the spiral and goes round and round, he soon becomes dizzy and falls with plaintive cries to the floor. He can climb up my own legs, since they are not spiral, you say? Yes, but I rub castor oil on them before I enter the kitchen.

The cockroach has a fascinating personality. He is not socialistic and faithful, like the ant, for example: he is anarchistic, wild, temperamental, and fond of adventure. He is also contemplative by nature, like other philosophers. How many an evening, at midnight, when I have wanted a sandwich, I have found him and his friends

standing still, lost in thought, by the sink. When I poke him up, he blinks with his antennae and slowly makes off. On the other hand, he can run at high speed when the cook is pursuing him. And he zigzags his course most ingeniously. He uses his head. Captain Dodge, of the British Navy, who first used this method to escape from a submarine, is said to have learned how to zigzag from the cockroaches aboard his own ship. They should go down in history, those roaches, with the geese that saved Rome.

Again and again I have tried to make a pet of the cockroach, for I believe under his natural distrust he has an affectionate nature. But some hostile servant has invariably undone my work. The only roach I succeeded in taming was hardly a pet, because he used to hide with the others half the time when he saw me, and once in a fit of resentment he bit a hole in my shoe. Still, he sometimes used to come at my call when I brought him warm tea. Poor fellow! poor Logan!—as I called him. He had a difficult life. I think he was slightly dyspeptic. Perhaps the tea was not good for him. He used to run about uttering low, nervous moans before moulting; and when his time came to mate, I thought he never would find the right doe. How well I remember my thrill when he picked one at last, and when I knew that I was about to

see their nuptial flight. Higher and higher they circled over the clean blue linoleum, with their short wings going so fast they fairly crackled, till the air was electric: and then, swirling over the dresser, their great moment came. Unhappily, Logan, with his usual bad luck, bumped the bread-box. The doe, with a shrill, morose whistle, went and laid on the floor; but Logan seemed too balked to pursue her. His flight was a failure.

He rapidly grew old after this, and used to keep by himself. He also got into the habit of roaming around outdoors at night. Hated to see other roaches mating by the bread-box, perhaps. As he was too big to crawl back in under the door when we shut it, he was sometimes locked out when he roamed, and had to wait until morning. This in the end caused his death. One winter evening, blocked at the door, he climbed the fire-escape and tried to get in the bathroom window. But it chanced to be shut. He hung there all night, barking hoarsely—and I heard him, but never thought it was Logan. When I went to look at the thermometer in the morning, there he lay in the snow.

Portrait of a Lady

Elsie has just got back from an expedition to the Sea Islands. She had had her eye on those islands for a long time, she tells me. They lie off the coast of South Carolina, out of the way of all traffic, and they looked to her like a good hunting ground for African folk-lore. Her ethnological field-work is always taking her off to such places. I suppose that that Englishman, Selous, used to go around studying maps, and questioning natives about the best jungles for lions, in much the same way that Elsie constantly studies our continent, looking for some corner of it that might interest an intelligent person. The parts that are civilization to us, are mere jungle to her: the houses and street cars are like underbrush that she must push through, to get to the places where her quarry is, and where she really wakes up. In between, she lives in New York with us,—she has to,—and conforms to our ways, or to most of them anyhow, just as Stefansson does with the Eskimos: she wears the usual tribal adornments, and beadwork, and skins; she's as dazzling as any other beauty, in her box at the opera; and she sleeps and eats in the family's big stone igloo near Fifth Av-

enue. An unobservant citizen might almost suppose she was one of us. But every now and then her neglect of some small ceremonial sets our whole tribe to chattering about her, and eyeing her closely, and nodding their hairy coiffures or their tall shiny hats, whispering around their lodge-fires, evenings, that Elsie is queer.

When she went south this time, she first placed herself "in the hands of the whites," as she detachedly puts it: that is to say, she became the guest of a white family on one of the more civilized islands. This was a mistake. They were interested in her plans, and they didn't in the least mean to block them, but they felt it was necessary for them to go around with her everywhere. They wanted to be sure nothing happened,—and Elsie wanted to be sure something did. "They guarded me," she exclaimed, over and over, when she told me this part of it. I got an impression of her tramping off into the wilds, after breakfast, to look around for what she was after, in her business-like way; and of worried hostesses panting along, following her,—in spite of the cold looks they got.

There were also a number of small difficulties. Her smoking, for instance. Her hostesses didn't mind—much; but they had a brother, a clergyman, just back from France, where he had been in the Y. M. C. A. service; and it would

upset *him,* they said. So instead of smoking downstairs, by the fire, she had to do it up in her room; and also burn Chinese incense after each smoke, by request.

This clergyman held family prayer-meetings, regularly, which everybody was supposed to attend; but Elsie did not object. She is always interested in ritual. And the singing was often of negro spirituals, which she is collecting. She has a recording phonograph, nowadays, that she takes around with her, to get them.

This wasn't what she had come down for, however. It wasn't enough. And not being able to explore without being "guarded" made the country no use to her. The game was too shy to be stalked with a whole crowd of whites. So in order to make a new entrance, she decided on a preliminary retreat. She left the islands, went back to the mainland, and took a room in a boarding-house.

There was a lady in the neighborhood who once had collected a few negro tales, but who told Elsie that the colored folk around there didn't tell them now. The lady wanted to be obliging, and called in her cook to make sure; but the cook corroborated her statement: didn't know any, no ma'am.

Elsie formed the opinion that the cook probably knew plenty of stories, but would not talk freely

to whites. Few or none of them will. She kept on making inquiries, however, as to possible sources, and finally heard about one old negro who was said to be chock-full of folk-lore. Elsie got on his trail. She found him one day in the street, and she soon won him over. He not only told her all he knew, but he stopped a one-armed man going by,—a dirty man with a wheel-barrow full of old bottles—who, the old man said, knew other stories, and who promptly made good, telling several that Elsie took down, while she sat on the curb.

This negro's name was Mr. Jack—at least that is how Elsie speaks of him. He had lost his other arm after a man had shot him up, he said, skylarking. But he could do remarkable things with his remaining one: open an umbrella, for instance. He said that on one of the islands there were people who knew lots of old tales. So Elsie engaged Mr. Jack to go there with her, as guide, and off they sailed, like the owl and the pussy-cat, only with quite other intentions, and they ultimately landed on the beach of the island he'd chosen. There was no wharf. The Sea Islands are primitive. They had to land in the surf. There were two or three natives on the beach, just the way there were when Columbus appeared, but they didn't fall down and worship Elsie—as I should have done. They just stared, and shuf-

fled away, and were lost in the bush. So Elsie and Mr. Jack pushed on inland, and found a negro with a horse, and Elsie gave him some sticks of tobacco and bright-colored cloth, or whatever currency it is she uses, and added him to her expedition. His name was James Bone, and he had a cart as well as a horse. They all got in this cart and went cruising away into the interior.

It was raining like mad, I forgot to say, but they didn't much mind, and besides it had a result in the end that was lucky for Elsie. There was a store on this island, and James Bone was heading for it, with the idea of depositing Elsie there so she could get shelter. But when they got there, the white man who kept it said his wife was away, and probably wouldn't be back that night because of the rain. Elsie wished to stay anyhow, but he flatly declined to take her in unless his wife came.

After making a silent study of his moral ideas, which he expressed loudly, and writing them down in her notebooks (I hope) for the Folkways Society, Elsie quietly went out in the rain again to continue her travels. It was now dark, however, and Mr. Jack and James Bone were tired. The expedition conferred. James Bone said they could go to some friends of his, named (I think) Peevie, who had a large house with five rooms in it. So they steered for this landmark. But when they arrived, very late, all the five rooms were

found to be full. In addition to the whole Peevie family, which was sufficiently numerous, there were several Peevie relations and guests who had come on for a funeral. But James Bone was insistent. He went indoors and stirred them up and made a lot of talk and excitement, and never stopped until the funeral guests rose and went away, in the rain; and with them all the relations except old Aunt Justine and her nieces. These and the regular family somehow packed themselves into three rooms, and gave up the two best to Elsie, who promptly retired. I don't know where Mr. Jack slept. Maybe under the cart.

This cabin was about the most comfortable place Elsie stayed. She could smoke all she wished, she had a fireplace, and the cooking was good. Her two rooms were only six by ten apiece, but all the more cozy. Old Aunt Justine who at first had not liked it, thawed after a while, and sat around with Elsie and smoked with her and told her old tales. She was a picturesque ancient, Elsie says, and wore a large clean white turban.

Everybody came and told Elsie all the stories they knew. If any one passed on the road, he was hailed to come in: "Hi, Numph, d'you wanter make a quarter, telling this lady a story?"

"We wouldn't have told you any, though, if you had stayed at the store," James Bone said. "We don't have no traffic with the white folks, only buying or selling. They keep to themselves, and we keep to ourselves, 'cept for that."

Elsie put it all down. "No nexus exists but the economic one between the two groups," she wrote. Then, having exhausted this island, she packed up her notebooks, and she and Mr. Jack put to sea again to visit one other.

This other was an island where Mr. Jack said he had relatives, whom he would love dearly to see again if they were alive. He had lived right over on the mainland without visiting them for about twenty years, until Elsie came along and roused his energies; but he now felt warmed up. When they landed, however, none of his relatives were at all glad to see him. He and Elsie wandered around for a while, getting a chilling reception, until late in the day they met some women who were opening oysters. One of these exclaimed at seeing Mr. Jack, and gave him a great welcome. An old sweetheart, Elsie conjectured. Mr. Jack introduced her. These women gave Elsie a handful of oysters to eat for her supper, and she got out some of her own thick bran cookies which are so good for the stomach, and they sat by the fire and talked together until it was midnight. Then the oyster boat left for the main-

land, with Elsie aboard. And luckily there was a man on that boat who knew some valuable stories, so Elsie sat up all night taking them down, by a ship's lamp, as they sailed. The wind was light and it was five hours before they reached port.

She parted with Mr. Jack, on the oyster-dock landing, at dawn. "I stayed wid you to de en'," he said; and afterwards mailed her her rubbers.

There is more to this story, about her visiting the Cherokee Indians down there. But I don't remember the Cherokee chapter as well as the old Mr. Jack one. Still I hope this gives some kind of picture of Elsie's real life.

Grandfather's Three Lives

A great Englishman died a few years ago, little known in America. His name, Sir Charles Dilke. A statesman, a radical, a republican; and a strong solid man.

There is one thing that strikes you about some of these leaders, in England: the number of advantages they have when they're boys, growing up. It gives them a tremendous head-start. Charles Dilke began meeting great men when he was a mere child: the Duke of Wellington, Thackeray, Dickens,—I could name a long list. And he had the close companionship of a grandfather, a man of distinction, who treated him as an equal, and devoted himself to his grandson's development.

A fortunate boy.

Think of other small boys, who show signs of fine brains and strong characters. Are they ever introduced to Thackeray or treated as equals? No, they're taught to respect their dull fathers and their fathers' ideas. They are taught not to have any separate ideas of their own. Or at best they run wild with no wise elder friend, like Charles Dilke's.

Here is one of his grandfather's letters.

Shows the tone of their friendship. The boy has just won an English Essay Prize, and "they say that parts of my essay were vulgar," he writes. "My special interest," his grandfather answers, "is aroused by the charge of occasional vulgarity. If it be true, it is not improbable that the writer caught the infection from his grandfather. With one half the world, in its judgment of literature and life, vulgarity is the opposite of gentility, and gentility is merely negative, and implies the absence of all character, and, in language, of all idiom, all bone and muscle. . . . You may find in Shakespeare household words and phrases from every condition and walk in life—as much coarseness as you please to look for—anything and everything except gentility and vulgarity. Occasional vulgarity is, therefore, a question on which I refuse to take the opinion of any man not well known to me."

Good for Grandfather! Eh? He was a pretty interesting old boy. He might have been a great man himself, if he could have brought himself up. But Great-grandfather had been in the government's service in England, some position in the Navy Department, or the Admiralty, as they call it. And when his son grew up, he got him a place in the Admiralty too. He meant well, but Grandfather might have done better without.

It gave him a berth, and a chance to lie back and look on. And while that helped to ripen his wisdom, it sapped his initiative.

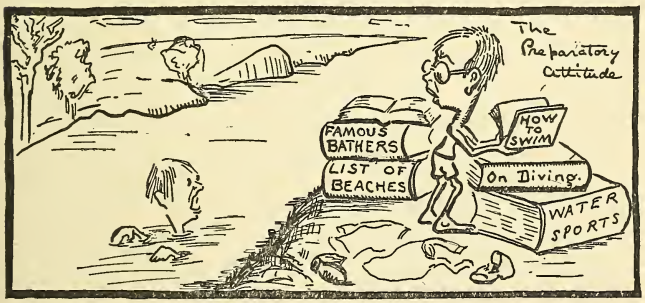
He had a fine mind; clear, impartial. Strong radical views. He had character, integrity, insight. A man of much weight. But he saw there was much to be learned and observed about life, and his instinct was to go slow, and quietly study its problems. "Instead," you say, "of immediately solving them like other young men!" But instead, too,—for such was his instinct—of *handling* the problems. He wished to know more and feel wiser before he dealt with them. He had the preparatory attitude.

The trouble with the preparatory attitude is there's no end to it. There is so much to learn in this world that it won't do to wait. If you wait to fit yourself before acting, you never will act. You will somehow lose the habit of acting. Study too conscientiously the one hundred best books on swimming, and of course you'll learn a great deal about it, but you never will swim.

This was Grandfather's type. If he had been kicked out alone into the world and found every one fighting him, and if he had had to fight back, and fight hard, from his boyhood, it would have taught him the one thing he needed—more force for his powers.

As it was, he remained in the Admiralty. Studying life.

Grandfather was thirty-seven years old when



Great-grandfather died. He (Grandfather) had been writing for the magazines for quite a long time,—he was only twenty-six when the Quarterly Review editors began to speak highly of him.

He now bought the London Athenaeum, which, though just born, was dying. Under Grandfather's editorship it became an important authority. It was known all over the world soon. But Grandfather wasn't. He never signed one of his articles, not even pseudonymously. And during the sixteen years in which he had control of the paper, this remarkable man withdrew altogether from general society, in order, he said, to avoid making literary acquaintances which might either prove annoying to him, or be supposed to compromise the integrity of his journal.

That rings hollow, that reason. He doubtless thought it true; but it wasn't. He withdrew from society, probably, because he liked withdrawing. With the gifts of a great man he didn't have a great man's robustness. Some kink in him held him back, and kept him from jousting and tournaments. He should have been psychoanalyzed. It may have been such a small kink.

I doubt if he ever would have married, but it happened quite young. He was under nineteen, and the pretty girl he married still younger. Maybe she married *him*. They had one son, soon after their marriage; but no other children.

I wonder if Grandfather was a case of suppressed personality. It wasn't a weak personality. It would not stay suppressed. But it didn't come out boldly and naturally, and live a full life. Not as full a life as its own wisdom and strength made appropriate. He achieved several things, and they weren't unimportant or small, yet he constantly slighted his life-work; in fact, hardly spoke of it. Modern psychologists do not call this attitude modesty, like our nice naïve fathers. No, they say it comes oftenest from the sexual errors of boyhood. For instance, repression. Or shame at misguided indulgence.

This kind of boyhood is unfortunate, but it might do small harm, if it weren't for the sad sense of guilt with which it stains a man's mind.

Men try to forget it, and do: but their subconsciousness never forgets. To be cured, a man must face and remember his past, open-eyed, and see his mistakes philosophically and understand better: understand what we all are, and what human nature is made of, and how it is distorted in youth by a rigid environment. The average moralist or parent won't tell us these things. But until we have learned them, a good many of us feel wicked, and can't put behind us the wretched mistakes of our youth. We don't know enough to regard our young struggles with sympathy. Our ignorance makes us believe we have blackened our souls. And the man who keeps silent and never tells, and hence never learns, goes through the world semi-subdued. Never gets what it owes him.

Was Grandfather Dilke such a case? I've no warrant for saying so. His conscience may have troubled him, possibly, for some quite different reason. He may have secretly hated some relative whom he should have loved. He may have done some small wrong and unfortunately not been found out. But whatever the reason was, he lived an odd, back-groundish life—for a man of his caliber. And his life didn't satisfy him. And this was his fault, not the world's.

The birth of a son, however, in a way gives a man a fresh chance. He decides to live a second

and far better life through his son. Whenever a parent feels blue, or is not making good, he immediately declares that his hopes are in his little son anyhow. Then he has a sad, comfortable glow at his own self-effacement. Oh, these shirking fathers! They allow *themselves* to give way to weariness, or be halted by fears; but expect a son, when *he* comes to such moments, to find them quite jolly. He's to make up for the weakness of his father, and carry his own burdens, too!

I regret to say Grandfather Dilke sought relief in this way. Although young, strong, and gifted, he said when his own son was born that he then and there committed all his dreams of achievement to Baby. Baby was to go out in the world and do his papa honor.

The child was called Wentworth, and it grew up sound, healthy, and kind. But when poor Mr. Dilke bet on Wentworth, he backed the wrong horse. Wentworth didn't have anything in him of the statesman or scholar. He was idle at studies. No head for them. What he liked was athletics. He liked comradeship and enjoying life generally—in a nice way, however. A simple, conservative-minded and limited soul. During his early years in London he was principally known to his friends for never missing a

night at the opera. And he was devoted to shooting-parties.

Later on, he became still more trying, it would seem, to his parent. Instead of remaining in his place as a plain disappointment, he began to be prominent; and, stupidly, in just the wrong field. He became a sort of parody of the man his father had hoped he would be. He hadn't the brains, for example, to do anything in the learned Athenaeum, but he founded The Gardeners' Chronicle and the Agricultural Gazette. He did well with them, too, which was irritating. He turned out to be a good man of business.

About this time a National Exhibition of some sort was held, and Wentworth was in on it. (It was an exhibition of "art manufacturers.") Then somebody got the idea of repeating it on a large scale and including foreign nations: in fact to make it the first of World's Fairs. So Wentworth and the others met the Prince Consort, to get Royalty's blessing.

The Prince Consort liked the plan immensely. He made it his hobby. Numerous committees were appointed, in true simian style, and amid endless speeches and palaverings, the thing was arranged. Wentworth, except when on shooting-parties, worked hard for it.

This made a great noise; but I doubt if it im-

pressed Mr. Dilke. It was at bottom cheap stuff which any advertiser or promoter could do. It sounded well; it made a man prominent, but it didn't take brains. What Mr. Dilke had hoped or intended for his son I don't know; perhaps nothing definite; but he certainly wanted something that counted. He wanted him to make a contribution to the needs of mankind. Some achievement in scholarship, or some hand in the steering of England.

Mr. Dilke was, potentially, anyhow, a big sort of man, like a nation's prime minister: a publicist, not a mere showman. And for years he had given all his thoughts to his son's career. His son had been the one he first thought of when he woke in the morning, and the last one that stayed in his mind when he got into bed. And he hadn't just mooned around about him, he had worked for his welfare, planned each step of his education, for instance, and pondered his plans.

And then the creature grows up to run The Gardeners' Chronicle, and work for World Fairs.

There were some small advantages. The creature was brought into relations with prominent men and kings throughout Europe, mostly figureheads, perhaps, but not all; and these relations were destined to be of use to the Dilkes later on. But it must have seemed awfully silly to Grandfather to see Wentworth being presented with

medals, and honors, and gifts from foreign governments. And as though this weren't enough, Queen Victoria wished to make him a baronet! Mr. Dilke, being a radical, was opposed to his taking a title; so Wentworth, who was fifty-one, declined it, like a dutiful child. But the Queen made a personal matter of it, so he had to accept. It seems that he and the Prince Consort had become quite good friends—both being pleasant, gentlemanly, and wooden (at least in some ways), and having in common an innocent love of World Fairs; and this had endeared Wentworth Dilke, more or less, to the Queen. So, after the Prince Consort died, and while she was feeling her grief, she pressed this small title on Wentworth because the Prince liked him.

Wentworth was now a powerfully connected person and a vastly more important man in the public eye than Grandfather was. But he and his father lived in the same house; and, although Mr. Dilke didn't say much, he had his own scale of values; and, measured by any such scale, Wentworth was a great disappointment. Their daily relations were kindly, consid-



ering this; but Wentworth knew well, all the time, he was deemed an inferior. When he was out and about, in the public eye, he may have felt like a lord, but when he came home nights he had to check his pride at the door.

Meantime he had married and had two sons; and Charles, the elder, was bright. So Mr. Dilke, the incorrigible, began life all over again. He hadn't been satisfied with his own life, and far less with Wentworth's, but he planned a third career for himself in this promising grandson. He didn't merely take an interest in the child, or just make him his hobby. He centered his whole mind upon him. He made it his business in life to develop that infant—in order that through him he might at last reach the front row.

And this time he won. It looked doubtful at first; Charles was nervous and frail, and hence backward. His mind was too excitable and his health too poor to send him to school. That's a handicap in England; school associations and training count much. However, the boy easily mastered his studies at home, and he often met eminent men who came around to the house, and he made some experiments in literature—in fact, wrote a novel. And when sixteen, he met a beautiful girl, Emilia Strong, whom he worshiped. And he traveled, and talked with his grandfather; and so he grew up.

At eighteen his health grew much better: in fact, grew robust. He immediately entered Cambridge, and there he began a new life. This was a splendid thing for him, in a number of ways. For instance, one of the first things he did was to go in for athletics. He had a flat, narrow chest, sloping shoulders; but the rowing men trained him; and he worked until he became a good oar, and could row on a crew.

He had lived almost entirely with grown-ups before going to college, and was much more mature and well-informed than the fellows he met there. But some parts of his nature had never had a chance to come out; his sense of fun, for example. He now began having good times with boys of his own age. He worked so hard at his rowing that he finally stroked the first crew. And "nobody could make more noise at a boating supper," one of his friends said. He even got into a scrape and was deprived of a scholarship he had won.

All these new ways of Charles—except the scrape, possibly—must have seemed right and normal, and even, perhaps, reassuring to his father, Sir Wentworth. But Sir Wentworth became alarmed lest they shouldn't please Mr. Dilke. He feared Mr. Dilke was going to be disappointed all over again, by a student who found university life too full of pleasure. The unfor-

tunate baronet, therefore, wrote Charles for heaven's sake to be studious.

He need not have worried. Charles became a wonder at studies. And it wasn't just brilliance—it was long, steady hours, plus brains and concentration, that did it. One thing that helped him do so much was that he never wasted time—he used every spare minute for something. He "would even get in ten minutes of work between river and Hall." He not only became a prize scholar and oarsman, but won walking races; he joined the Volunteers and became a crack rifle shot, and went in for debating.

His votes and speeches in the debates show the trend of his mind, which was balanced yet radical, like his grandfather's, and always progressive. The American Civil War, which was then being fought, was debated; and the undergraduates voted for the Confederate side, three to one. This was the general feeling in England. But Charles was for the North. Again, when Lord Palmerston was helping to start the Greek monarchy, Charles spoke in favor of a Greek republic, in a college debate.

He wrote long letters to his grandfather regularly about studies and politics, and sent him able analyses and criticisms of articles in the Athenaeum. The old man at first had been rather silent because of the athletics; but as Charles' mind de-

veloped, and as he continued winning prizes in studies, Mr. Dilke grew happier and happier. They were forever corresponding, and were on the most affectionate terms.

Then, one day, a telegram came for Charles, and he hurried home. Wentworth was on the lawn, crying. "He lives only to see you," he said.

"I went upstairs," Charles wrote afterward, "and sat down by the sofa on which lay the Grand, looking haggard, but still a noble wreck. I took his hand, and he began to talk of trivial matters. . . . He seemed to be testing his strength, for at last he said: 'I shall be able to talk to-morrow; I may last some weeks; but were it not for the pang that all of you would feel, I should prefer that it should end at once. I have had a good time of it.' "

The next day they had their last talk. Mr. Dilke made his boy a present he had planned for his birthday, and entrusted him with the disposition of his papers and manuscripts. And he told him, "I have nothing more to say but that you have fulfilled—my every hope—beyond all measure—and—I am deeply—grateful."

So he died.

Charles went back to Cambridge and finished his course with the greatest distinction. He then began contributing to the Athenaeum, and planning to write books. "A History of Radical-

ism," for example. "The Effects Upon Radicalism of Increased Facility of Communication." "Development of the Principle of Love of Country Into That of Love of Man." In politics he took the Irish Catholic side of the Irish Question; he wrote strongly in favor of removing the political disabilities of women, and he criticized the severity of white men toward natives in the tropics.

He also had a row with his father. Sir Wentworth was vexed because Charles didn't wish to come to his shooting-parties.

When he was twenty-two, Charles made a tour of the world, and recorded his observations in a remarkable book. It was a solid, serious volume, yet written in a vein of high spirits. It dealt with Canada, the United States—East, South, and West—New Zealand, Australia, Ceylon and India; it was a study of what Anglo-Saxons were doing in these great civilizations. Charles mailed his MSS. to England, and Sir Wentworth took it upon himself to correct the proofs, in order to hurry the book through the press. The result was a crop of blunders. But still, it was an enormous success. It ran through three editions rapidly, and brought Charles the friendship of some great men.

Meantime in his twenty-fifth year he was elected to Parliament—at the very election at which Sir

Wentworth lost his seat, by the way. Charles advocated laws ('way back in the Sixties) to prohibit child labor, to recognize trades unions, and stop the buying of commissions in the army. He advised English workmen not to join the regular political parties, but to start a Labor Party of their own and gain influence that way. He also upset his father a good deal by urging amendments to the game laws. His first speech in Parliament was on some dry, technical subject, but he showed himself so well-informed, so full of detailed knowledge and foreign comparisons, that he was immediately put on a committee and began to make his way in the House.

It's interesting to look back and see how able men get their start.

In his twenty-eighth year this able man got into frightful hot water. He said publicly that a miserable moral and political tone resulted from the nation's retaining a lot of sinecure offices—Hereditary Grand Falconer, and all that sort of thing. He pointed out that the Duke of Edinburgh had been given a naval command without much naval training, and he advocated promotion by merit instead of by claims due to birth. He allowed himself to criticize some large grants of money to the monarchy. His remarks indicated that theoretically he preferred a republic. For this he was denounced by the papers, and socially shunned.

He was accused of disloyalty and treason, with the greatest heat, everywhere. His name was a by-word. The Prince of Wales happened about this time to get very ill, and this added still further to the anger men felt at Charles Dilke.

He didn't back down. He went out and made speeches to workmen, repeating his anti-King criticisms. There was rioting by Tory roughs—iron bars thrown—men injured and killed. Crowds collected who swore that Dilke should not get away alive from the hall. He waited till the excitement was hottest, then came out the main door alone, stood quietly looking at them, lit a cigar, and walked off.

He did, however, gradually calm down the nation in one way, by showing them that, though he objected to monarchical errors, he didn't wish to upset the monarchy while it suited the people. He thought it absurd, but it would be still more absurd to upset it—that is to say, while those governed wanted it. This attitude, and time (several years of it) slowly stilled the excitement. The net result was to make this man a notable and recognized power.

His power kept growing. His influence was great in the House. His views were strong, but reasoned and sane, and his industry endless. He was now forty-two. Gladstone, with whom he tilted at first, picked him as his successor. It

looked as though this great progressive would be premier of England.

Then, in a night, the Fates crushed him. Returning home from a dinner in his honor, he found a letter there, waiting.

It said that the wife of a member of Parliament had confessed to her husband that she had been unfaithful to him with Charles Dilke soon after her marriage.

This, of course, meant a scandal. And a scandal meant he couldn't be premier. He couldn't even sit in the cabinet. His career was destroyed.

Sir Charles (as he now was) had been married, but his wife had soon died. After ten years as a widower, he had become engaged to Emilia Strong —you remember?—the same Emilia whom he had worshiped when he was sixteen. (She had been married, too, in the meantime, but she now was a widow.) His principal concern with this blow was not to let it hurt her. He sent her the news, told her he was innocent, and added, "I feel this may kill you—and it will kill me, either if it kills you or if you don't believe me."

She stood by him, married him. They had nineteen years of each other. He was sixty-one when she died in his arms. He lived to be sixty-eight.

He never could clear his name of the scandal, though he took it to court. They failed to show

he was guilty, but he couldn't *prove* that he wasn't. So he never was premier, and he never again sat in the cabinet.

His friends said his whole career showed that the scandal was false. They stood by him strongly. But the People, whom he would have served with such courage, did not.

Story of a Farmer

There once was a tall husky fellow, big hands and feet; not much education. (Though he came of a fairly good family.) He had very bad teeth. His father had left him a farm, and that was his great interest—farming. He had the kind of feeling about farming that a good shoemaker has about shoes. Of course, he complained more or less, and felt dissatisfied and discouraged, and threatened to give up his farm when things went badly. But there was nothing else he could have willingly turned to; and he was never weary of experimenting with different ways of planting his crops.

He was a sound-thinking man, and men trusted him. He grew prominent. Held some offices. As a result, when he was forty-three he had to go away from home for some years. This was while he was managing an army. And I ought to explain that it was a hard army to manage. It was not only badly equipped and poorly trained, but sometimes the men would run away in the midst of a battle. That made this man angry. He was ordinarily composed and benign in his manner, but when he saw the soldiers showing fear

he used to become violently aroused, and would swear at them and strike them. His nature loathed cowardice. He cared nothing for danger himself, perhaps because of his teeth, and he couldn't understand why these other men dreaded to die.

All his life, when he was at table with others, he used to sit there in silence, drumming on the cloth with his fork. He seldom joked. He was hardly ever playful. People said he was too dignified, too solemn. Well! one isn't apt to be a comedian, precisely, with toothache. He was only twenty-two when he began having his teeth pulled, they tortured him so; and he kept on losing them, painfully, year after year.

About this army again. He didn't want to manage it. He had had quite a liking for military work, as a youth, and had even gone on a small expedition to see active service, though his mother had interfered all she could, and tried hard to prevent him. But as this was all the experience he ever had had, and as he had never studied warfare, he didn't know anything about handling large bodies of troops.

However, he had a clear mind and a good natural insight; and in spite of his ignorance, of which he was painfully conscious, he managed to win the war, and then thankfully returned to his farm. He went back with enthusiasm. He had

been away for eight years altogether, and for six of those years he did not once set foot on his fields. He had found time, however, in between whiles, to talk with the farmers in the northerly parts of his country, and collect new ideas. He now began to experiment with plaster of Paris and powdered stone as fertilizers. He tried clover, rye, peas, oats and carrots to strengthen his land. He tried mud. He planted potatoes with manure, and potatoes without, and noted exactly what the difference was in the yield. His diary speaks of the chinch bugs attacking his corn, and of the mean way the rain had of passing by on the other side of the river, falling generously there, while "not enough fell here to wet a handkerchief." He laboriously calculated the number of seed in a pound (this retired Commander!) and found that red clover had 71,000, timothy 298,000 and barley 8,925.

He also began at this time to use false teeth, which fitted him badly. And he was laid up occasionally with malaria, and fever and ague. And he was called upon to help frame a constitution for his little nation. A busy period. He had an attack of rheumatism, too, which lasted over six months, and it was sometimes so bad he could hardly raise his hand to his head or turn over in bed. And when the national constitution had been adopted they elected him president.

That meant a lot of outside work for another eight years.

Some of this work he hated. He hated speech-making for instance. At his inauguration he was so agitated and embarrassed that men saw he trembled, and when he read his speech his voice was almost too low to be heard. He was always very conscious of having a poor education, and being a bad speller and so forth. But the people didn't care about that, much: they trusted his judgment, and admired the man's goodness and spirit.

A sculptor was sent to make a statue of him, late in his life. He couldn't get him to pose satisfactorily. No noble attitudes. In vain did the sculptor talk about state affairs and that war. Such things did not stir him. He remained either stiff or relaxed. But one day they were out on the farm together; and as this man watched his live-stock, he unconsciously took a fine, alive attitude. So the sculptor made a statue of him that way; and that statue is famous.

In spite of his usual benignity, this man had a temper. He used to get very sore and warm at times, when unfairly criticized. At one of his cabinet meetings, for instance, says a contemporary, he became "much inflamed, got into one of those passions when he cannot command himself, ran on much on the personal abuse which had been

bestowed on him [and said] that by God he had rather be in his grave than in his present situation. That he had rather be on his farm than to be made emperor of the world, and yet that they were charging him with wanting to be a king. That that rascal Freneau sent him three of his papers every day, as if he thought he would become the distributor of his papers; that he could see nothing in this but an impudent design to insult him," etc., etc. Poor, stung human being; with all his serenity gone!

A great portrait painter said of him that his features were indicative of the strongest and most ungovernable passions; and had he been born in the forests, it was his opinion that he would have been the fiercest man among the savage tribes.

This was the temperament that smoldered in him: the lurking flame that he had to live with daily. But by reflection and resolution he obtained a firm ascendancy over it.

One night when he was sixty-seven years old he woke up at about two in the morning feeling very unwell. He had had a sore throat, and now he couldn't swallow; felt suffocated. A miserable feeling. His wife would have got up to call a servant; but he wouldn't allow her to do it lest she should catch cold. He lay there for four hours in the cold bedroom, his body in a chill, before receiving any attention or before even a

fire was lighted. Then they sent for the doctors. They bled the old hero three times, taking the last time a quart. He was physically a vigorous man, but this weakened him greatly. "I find I am going," he said. He was in great pain, and said, "Doctor, I die hard." A little later he added: "I feel I am going. I thank you for your attention, you had better not take any more trouble about me, but let me go off quietly." His breathing became much easier just at the end.

Did he look back over his life as he lay there, waiting, and what did he think of it? That his farming had been interesting though difficult, and much interrupted? That his fellow-men had really asked a good many sacrifices of him, and not left him nearly as much time as he wished for his fields? Or did he think that in death he would at least have no more trouble with teeth? A set of dental instruments was found in one of his drawers after the funeral. In others were memoranda about affairs of state he had worked at, and various kinds of plows he had tried, and his farming accounts.

His name was George Washington.

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Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Sept. 2009

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